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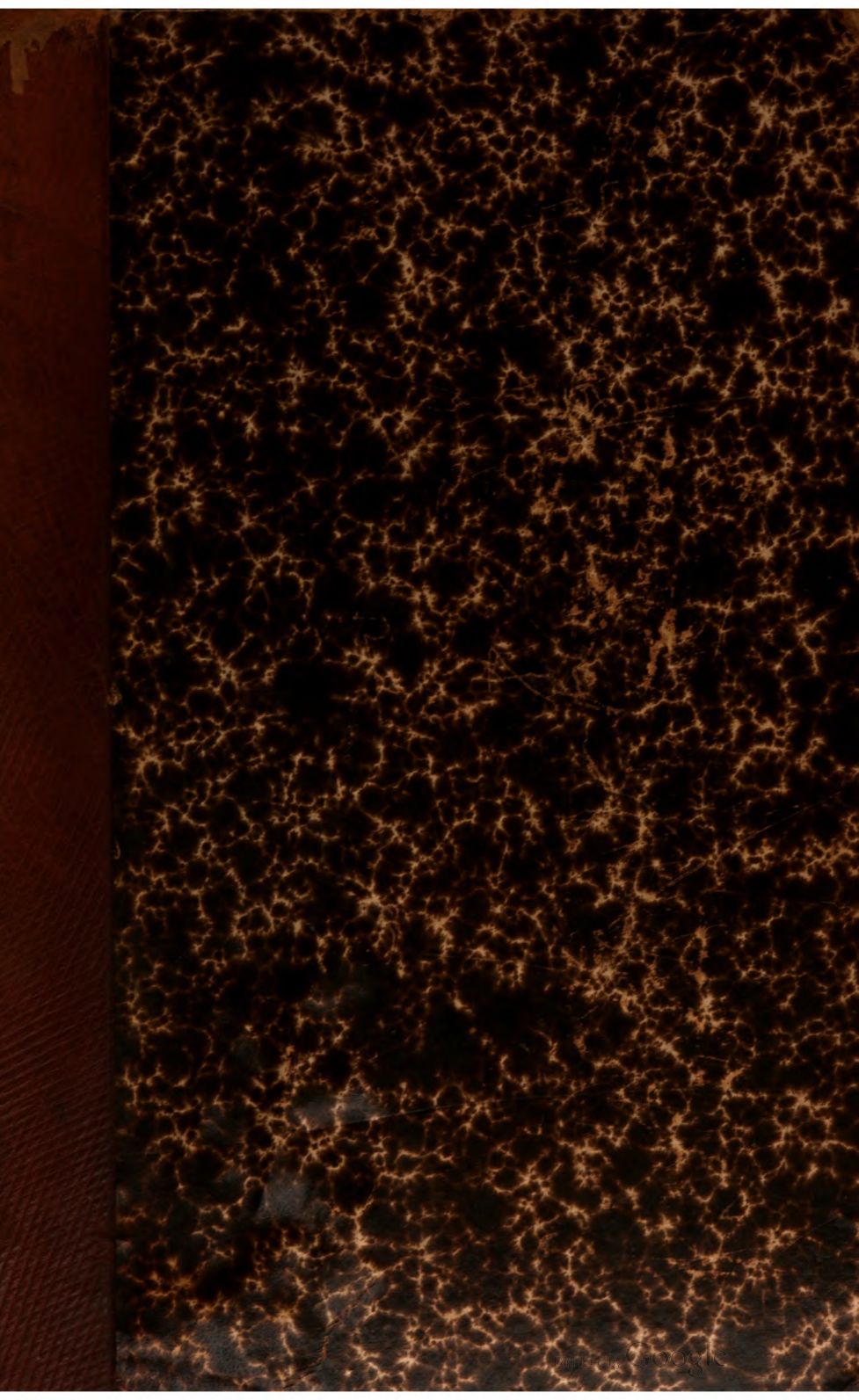
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Publications

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# Merlin

*Merlin*

OR

## The Early History of King Arthur:

### A PROSE ROMANCE

(ABOUT 1450-1460 A.D.)

EDITED FROM THE UNIQUE MS. IN THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, CAMBRIDGE,

BY

HENRY B. WHEATLEY.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

D. W. NASH, ESQ., F.S.A.

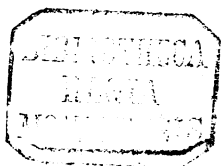
PART I.

LONDON:

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MDCCLXV.

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

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THE following Romance is printed from the unique MS. in the Library of the University of Cambridge, which forms a thick folio volume (13½ in. by 10 in.), containing two hundred and forty-five leaves of parchment. It is written in a very clear handwriting, and is in good condition, with the exception of a few pages, which are much rubbed, and two leaves which have a hole burnt through the middle of them; it also wants two leaves at the end. These imperfections can fortunately be completed by a translation from the original French.

The MS. is only divided into paragraphs, but in this edition the Romance has been cut up into chapters for convenience of reference, the paragraphs, however, being retained. This first part occupies about forty-two leaves of the MS., and may therefore be considered as a sixth portion of the whole work.

The Preface, Notes, and Glossary will be printed in the last part.

H. B. W.

<sup>c</sup>Merlin  
or  
The Early History of King Arthur.

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VOL. I.

**HERTFORD:**  
**Printed by STEPHEN AUSTIN AND SONS.**

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### OUTLINES OF THE HISTORY OF THE LEGEND OF MERLIN.

BY

WILLIAM EDWARD MEAD, PH.D. (LIPS.).

ALSO,

ESSAYS ON MERLIN THE ENCHANTER AND MERLIN THE BARD,

by D. W. NASH, F.S.A.; and ARTHURIAN LOCALITIES,

by J. S. STUART GLENNIE.

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## PREFACE.

THE completion of this edition of the Prose Romance of Merlin, after a delay of nearly thirty years, affords an opportunity for some words of excuse and explanation from the original editor.

The first part was issued in 1865, the second in 1866, and the third in 1869. I find that I made in the last-named part a rash promise that the fourth part, containing an Introduction, Index, Glossary, etc., would be issued in the course of that year. I therefore feel deeply that the members of the Early English Text Society have reason to complain that they have so long been allowed to have an imperfect book on their shelves, and I take this opportunity of expressing my sincere regret for this extreme case of delay. I fear that I cannot put forward any excuse that will be considered satisfactory, but I may perhaps be forgiven now that at last, thanks to the labours of Dr. Mead, members will be able to bind the complete work.

I will, however, ask permission to state the circumstances which explain the delay to a certain extent. The Index and Glossary made by the late Mr. Joseph Wimperis and Mr. George Joachim, sometime Honorary Secretary, and completed by Mr. W. A. Dalziel, the Honorary Secretary since 1875, were long ago ready for press, and only waited for the Introduction. I am particularly anxious that no share of the blame for the delay should appear in any way to attach to my esteemed friends Messrs. Joachim and Dalziel, or to the memory of one whose loss will long be deplored by those who knew him as an enthusiastic student.

When the text was finished in 1869 I was prepared to commence the compilation of the Introduction, but at this time information was received respecting the discovery of Mr. Huth's French MS. with a unique continuation of the *Merlin*. Dr. Furnivall naturally desired me to hold my hand until we had received the

necessary information respecting this from the late Mons. Paulin Paris. Mons. Paris died in the midst of his researches, and when the valuable work of his son Mons. Gaston Paris—"Merlin, Roman en Prose du xiii<sup>e</sup> siècle, publié avec la mise en prose du poème de Merlin de Robert de Borron d'après le manuscrit appartenant à M. Alfred H. Huth, par Gaston Paris et Jacob Ulrich, Paris, 1886; 2 vols.; 8vo"—appeared I had resigned the secretaryship of the Early English Text Society, and my work from various causes had passed into other lines; and the break having been made I was unable to take the matter up.

Others were good enough to enter into the breach, but it was not until Dr. Mead took the matter in hand that success was secured.

Now that the Introduction (completed some time back, but delayed by various causes) is launched upon the world, the members will be in possession of a most valuable history of the Merlin legend and its literary development. I hope, therefore, that now the shortcomings of the original editor may be forgiven, although they are connected with such a record case that I fear they will not be forgotten.

HENRY B. WHEATLEY.

*March 1, 1898.*

## I.

### INTRODUCTION.

OF THE great cycles of mediaeval romance none was more popular throughout Europe than the Arthurian cycle. From the first introduction of the Arthurian legends into French literature they caught the popular favour, and stimulated writers to an unwonted activity for a period embracing a well-rounded century, beginning toward the middle of the twelfth century and ending before the close of the thirteenth.<sup>1</sup>

In the history of the cycle we may distinguish with more or less accuracy three periods<sup>2</sup>—a period of preparation, a period of production, a period of translation and imitation. To the first period belongs the work of the Welsh bards and the pseudo-historic Latin chroniclers, Nennius and Geoffrey of Monmouth. To the second period belongs the work of the French romancers. To the third period belongs the work of translators and imitators in England and in the north and south of Europe.

In each of the romances the interest centres in a very small group of characters; so that what the story lacks in breadth it makes up in minuteness of detail. The earlier forms of the romances contain two figures that stand out most clearly—Arthur the King and Merlin the Enchanter. So great an interest attaches to these two names that we learn

<sup>1</sup> G. Paris, *Hist. Litt. de la France*, xxx. p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> We need scarcely remark that these periods overlap one another to some extent.

with some surprise that there is no adequate treatment in any language of the origin and development of the romances dealing with Arthur and Merlin. But there are two facts that have especially hindered the solution of the numerous problems involved in a history of the Arthurian romances: first, the vagueness and paucity of the earlier sources; and, secondly, the wide range of the later materials, which demand if they are to be satisfactorily treated an extensive and critical acquaintance with the French and Celtic literatures. Such an equipment is possessed by scarcely anyone who has thus far discussed the subject, and is expressly disclaimed by some of the most eminent investigators of portions of the Arthurian cycle.

Especial difficulties in the way of a demonstrable conclusion with regard both to the origin of the legend of Merlin and the development of the prose romance from earlier sources, meet the student at the beginning of his investigation and attend every step of his way. An initial difficulty appears in the chronology of the possible sources. We do not really know how much older any of the extant Welsh literature is than Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* (1135-47), to say nothing of the ninth-century Nennius.<sup>1</sup> As Mr. Nutt well observes: "The study of Celtic tradition is only beginning to be placed upon a firm basis, and the stores of Celtic myth and legend are only beginning to be thrown open to the non-Celtic scholar." A little further on he adds that "as a whole Welsh literature is late, meagre, and has kept little that is archaic."<sup>2</sup> If this be true of Welsh literature as a whole, still more is it true of the portions available for our purpose. Even after including all the poems, spurious and genuine alike, that assume the existence of Myrddin, we have only a few lines with which to construct a portrait. But when we are

<sup>1</sup> But see pp. lxxxiv-cxii.

<sup>2</sup> *Studies on the Legend of the Holy Grail*, p. xiii.



compelled to reject much of this material as late and untrustworthy, we can with difficulty resist the feeling that it is hardly worth while to thresh the old straw until we have some new data upon which to base an opinion, or until Celtic scholars agree somewhat more generally as to the meaning of the scattered fragments that we do possess.

There is now a very general agreement with regard to the chronological order and authorship of most of the Latin sources ; but their origin is still obscure, and the interpretation of them by no means harmonious.

In the French romances we find more abundant material, but we are left in almost hopeless confusion as to the exact order in which the several French versions of the prose romance were produced. The partial copying of the romance by those who were at once copyists and authors, and the retention of allusions to passages of the original romance—passages afterwards dropped from most of the versions—would be quite enough to throw us off the track. Then, too, romances that in all probability were written later than the original prose *Merlin* are by the aid of interpolated passages made to seem earlier works than the *Merlin*. As to the authors of the various prose versions of the *Merlin*, nothing is known and probably nothing ever will be known. We are obliged, therefore, to content ourselves with a *perhaps* where certainty would be most desirable. If we possessed all the Celtic literature that ever existed, Welsh poems, Breton *lais*, all the Latin sources, and all the French romances in prose and verse, with authentic dates and the names of the authors, we should still have an almost interminable task in attempting to follow out the tangled threads of the romances. But, as already remarked, these favourable conditions are lacking. The Welsh literature—the only Celtic source that we can seriously consider—is scanty and of not too convincing antiquity. The origin of

the Latin sources is doubtful; and even the Latin sources at most provide an explanation for only a portion of the romance. The French versions (with two or three exceptions) bear no date, and afford scarcely any guide to the chronology. The manuscripts are numerous and still unclassified as to age and generic relations. Only two manuscripts of the *Merlin*<sup>1</sup> have been published, unless we include the early printed editions of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. These old printed versions, it is needless to say, are exceedingly rare as well as uncritical, presenting a later, modernized text, and taking numerous liberties with the earlier versions.

These difficulties might be dwelt upon at greater length, but enough has been advanced to show the necessity of extreme caution in our assertions. Nothing final can be established with regard to the development of the romance until we possess a critical text, not only of the *Merlin*, but of all the other prose romances of the Arthurian cycle with which it is interwoven, and until a number of special researches have been made concerning the age of the manuscripts, the extent of the interpolated passages, and the meaning of the allusions to other romances. And even then we may seriously question whether a thoroughly consistent history of this or of any of the other romances of the Arthurian cycle can ever be written.

In taking leave of the questions that have occupied me so long, I regret to be obliged to confess that I have been able to add so little to what was already known. The account of the French manuscripts is new, and I trust will prove not altogether valueless. New also is a considerable part of the history of the legend in English literature, as well as other portions that need not be specified. Throughout the whole work I have

<sup>1</sup> The Huth MS. (*See. des Anc. Textes*) has been edited by G. Paris and J. Ulrich. Only pp. 1-107 of the English romance are here represented. Brit. Mus. MS., Add. 10,292 (cf. pp. cxl, clxvii, ccl), has been printed by H. Oskar Sommer, but without any investigation of the questions discussed in the following pages.

tried to be useful rather than original, and to present no theories unsupported by a large basis of facts. If once we can get a firm foundation of fact for the history of the romances, there will be abundant time for constructing theoretical explanations of the missing links.

I had originally intended to discuss the dialect and the grammatical forms of the *Merlin*, and to point out in detail the extent to which the structure of the sentences has been modified by the French original. But the fact that the entire romance as printed by the Early English Text Society had to be collated once more with the English manuscript, compelled me to defer that portion of the work, and to confine my attention almost wholly to literary questions. After the collations arrived I found that an adequate treatment of the language of the romance would unduly delay the publication of the other portion of the work. I have, therefore, attempted nothing more than to cite a few of the countless instances where French words have been transferred almost without change to the English translation.

It is perhaps unnecessary to remark that without the aid of the researches of Francisque Michel, Paulin Paris, Gaston Paris, H. L. D. Ward, Alfred Nutt, and others, a considerable part of this outline could not have been written. So much, too, remains yet to be done in the way of special investigation of the Arthurian romances, that I can at most regard this account as a mere passing contribution to the history of the *Merlin* legend. If this sketch can in any way serve to incite other scholars to a more careful study of French romance in its relations to our older English literature, I shall welcome the day when my own work is superseded.

It remains for me sincerely to thank those who have in any way aided in these researches. I owe much to the Director of the Bibliothèque de Ste. Geneviève, and the keepers of the MSS.

in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal and the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris; to M. Paul Meyer, Director of the École des Chartes, who made several suggestions about the French MSS.; to Mr. H. L. D. Ward, of the Department of MSS. in the British Museum, who discussed with me the earlier forms of the legend and read some of the proof; to my colleague Professor L. Oscar Kuhns, who read a portion of the proof, and translated Professor Novati's note on Arthur's fight with the great cat of Lausanne; to Mr. E. G. B. Phillimore, who read the proofs of the chapter on the early forms of the legend, and supplied several valuable notes; and most of all to Dr. F. J. Furnivall, who furnished me while in Paris with several much needed books, and has since attended to numerous details that could not easily be superintended at a distance of three thousand miles.

I may add that the proofs of all the extracts from the French manuscripts have been read in Paris while I have been in America, so that the accuracy of the specimens is to be credited to the MS. reader rather than to me.

The greater portion of the present investigation was completed in 1892, and placed in the hands of the printers. Numerous delays, which need not be explained here, have hindered the appearance of the book until now. The supplementary notes on pp. ccl-ccliv take account of later work on various matters connected with the Merlin legend. But the most important part of the following discussion—the account of the MSS.—is quite independent of any work that has recently appeared.—W. E. M.

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*July 2, 1897.*

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This list aims merely to indicate some of the more important books to be consulted by students wishing to test the conclusions reached in this investigation. The attempts to treat in detail the history of the Merlin legend are few, and, so far as English is concerned, are confined to a few essays and incidental discussions. Nor can all the books on the subject be used with entire confidence. Wright and Michel's introduction to the *Vita Merlini* contains much valuable matter, but some of the critical conclusions, notably those relating to the authorship of the *Vita Merlini*, are now almost universally abandoned. A similar criticism applies to much of San-Marte's work. Celtic scholarship has made great advances



since his day, and rendered obsolete much of the Celtic discussion in his books. His Welsh texts are hopelessly corrupt, and the translations inaccurate. Villemarqué's work is marred by fantastic speculation, and the endeavour to make facts square with a preconceived theory. His *Myrddhin* may be safely recommended to anyone who prefers not to see the facts as they are. Mr. Nash's essay leaves untouched a large number of important questions, and settles the rest dogmatically. In the work of M. Paulin Paris we must recognize what is on the whole the best general account that we possess. He devoted many years of a long life to the study of the Arthurian romances and the MSS. in which they are contained. In treating the *Merlin*, he could not within his limits answer all the questions suggested, but he showed in a multitude of instances in what relation the *Merlin* stands to the other romances of the Arthurian cycle, and put all future investigators under lasting obligations. M. de la Borderie's work shows care and scholarship, but several of his conclusions are not convincing. Mr. H. L. D. Ward's *Catalogue of Romances* is critical and cautious. He discusses the Merlin legend only incidentally in enumerating the MSS. in the British Museum, but his remarks on Geoffrey of Monmouth are perhaps the best that have yet appeared. The introduction to the Huth *Merlin* by M. Gaston Paris—the foremost authority in France on the Arthurian romances—is avowedly a mere sketch, but no student of the Merlin legends can afford to leave it unread. Kölbing's introduction to the *Arthur and Merlin* aims chiefly at showing the relation of the verse romance to the other Merlin romances. Dr. Sommer points out in detail the relation of Malory's *Morte Darthur* to the prose *Merlin*. The slight inaccuracies in his account are chiefly due to insufficient study of the French MSS. of *Merlin*, and are pardonable enough in view of the vast field to be covered. Prof. Rhys transfers to cloud-land and to myth most of the characters of the Arthurian romances. His *Studies* are learned and ingenious, if not always convincing, and of great value in throwing light upon the Celtic side of the Arthurian cycle, but they touch only a few of the questions that most concern us here.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For additional bibliographical notes on the Arthurian romances, see the list of works prefixed to G. Paris's *Hist. Litt. de la France*, vol. xxx.; the articles on *Celtic Lit. and Romance* in the *Encyc. Brit.*, 9th ed.; Ward's *Catal. of Romances*, vol. i.; Sommer's *Morte Darthur*, vol. iii. pp. 2-7; Gödeke's *Grundriss zur Geschichte der deutschen Dichtung*, 4 Bde., Dresden, 1859-81; and the works by Dunlop, Grässe, etc.

## III.

## THE STORY OF MERLIN.

## CHAPTER I.

COUNCIL OF DEVILS AND BIRTH OF MERLIN.<sup>1</sup>

AFTER our Lord saved the world from hell (1) the fiends in wrath hold a great council to get back what they have lost (2), and resolve to cause the birth of a man who shall do their will. The fiend who suggests the plan hastens at once to the evil wife of a rich man with three daughters and a son (3), kills by her advice the cattle and horses, strangles the son, makes the woman hang herself, and so causes the rich man to die of grief (4). Of the three daughters, one is seduced and condemned to be buried alive (5), another becomes a common woman (7), while the eldest, after resisting various temptations for two years, is finally deceived one night by the devil in her sleep (10).

In her distress she goes to her spiritual adviser (10), who at first gives no great credence to her story (11), but afterwards saves her from being burned alive (13). The maiden is then shut up in a strong tower till her child is born (14), whom she calls Merlin (15). The boy frightens the women by his ugliness, and astonishes them with his knowledge (16). When the mother with her child is brought to trial (17), Merlin confounds the judge and delivers his mother (21). Then, as the story says, they go where they please; but Merlin and the hermit Blase discourse together, till finally Merlin asks Blase to make a book of what shall be told him (22). Blase consents, and when he is ready, Merlin begins to tell of the love of Jesus Christ, and of Joseph of Arimathea, and of Pieron, and the end of Joseph and his companions (23).

<sup>1</sup> As the only purpose of this analysis is to aid in following the text, I have borrowed the headings of the chapters given in the text, and in some cases the running analysis of the margin. Details that do not aid in the development of the story have been omitted. The numerals inclosed in parentheses refer to the page. The variety of forms of the names causes some embarrassment. I am not sure that all the forms I have adopted are best. Consistency is difficult where the original is variable.

## CHAPTER II.

## KING VORTIGER AND HIS TOWER.

MERLIN further tells Blase of the men who are coming to put him (Merlin) to death, and says that he will go with them, but when they have heard him speak they will not want to slay him (23). Now in the land of Britain was a Christian king named Constance, who had three sons, Moyne, Pendragon, and Uter. At the death of Constance Moyne becomes king, and Vortiger, a worldly-wise man, is made his steward (24). Vortiger wins the hearts of the people, and when Moyne is defeated in battle by the heathen, and afterwards slain by his angry barons, the steward receives the crown (25). At this Moyne's two brothers, Pendragon and Uter, are prudently taken to Gaul. Vortiger hypocritically assumes his own innocence, puts to death the murderers of Moyne (26), and when warred upon by their friends gains the victory over them. Then for fear of the sons of Constance he orders his workmen to build a mighty tower as a refuge (27). The work is begun, but as soon as the walls are a few fathoms high they fall in ruins. Vortiger therefore commands his wise men to tell why the tower does not stand (28). After much delay they agree to tell Vortiger that the blood of a child, seven years old, born without a father, must be put in the foundation of the tower. Of twelve messengers sent out (29), four chance to meet, and while passing through a field near a town where children are playing, they see Merlin, who strikes another boy with his staff (30). The child cries and weeps, and calls Merlin a "misbegotten wretch, and fatherless."

At the questions of the messengers Merlin laughs and says: "I am he that ye seek, and he that ye be sworn ye should slay, and bring my blood to King Vortiger." Then the boy takes the messengers to Blase and corrects the account that they render of their errand (31). After this Merlin sends Blase to Northumberland, and promises to visit him there, bringing materials for the Book of the Saint-Graal (32). Merlin then departs with the messengers. On the way

he sees a churl with a pair of strong shoes and leather to mend them (33). Merlin laughs, for the fellow will die before reaching home. A little farther on he laughs again at a man weeping over his dead son, though the child is really the son of the priest (34). On coming to Vortiger, Merlin tells why the messengers have sought him, and says that the clerks have not told the truth (36). Then he confronts the clerks, who are dreading to lose their lives, and explains why the tower cannot stand (37). Under the tower is a great water, and under the water two dragons, one red and the other white, and above them two great flat stones. The labourers uncover the dragons, who at once begin to fight (38), and continue till the white dragon burns up the red. Merlin explains that King Vortiger is the red dragon, and that his end is nigh (40).

### CHAPTER III.

THE DEFEAT OF VORTIGER BY PENDRAGON AND UTER; THEIR SEARCH AFTER MERLIN; THE BATTLE OF SALISBURY AND THE DEATH OF PENDRAGON; AND THE FOUNDATION OF THE ROUND TABLE AT CARDOELL, IN WALES.

MEANWHILE Pendragon and Uter are coming in fulfilment of the prophecy. Merlin slips away to visit Blase (41), while Vortiger is burnt in his castle by Pendragon (42), who becomes king. While besieging Aungier, Pendragon hears of Merlin and sends in search of him. Merlin, as usual, knows all that is going on, and appears at first to the messengers as a beggar. They take him for the Devil, because he knows all their plans (43). A little later Merlin appears under several disguises to Pendragon himself, and announces the death of Aungier at the hands of Uter (44). At length he assumes his real form (45), and shortly after leaves the King in order to return to Blase (46). Eleven days later Merlin comes to court in the form of a boy messenger from Uter's mistress (47), and afterwards appears in his real form. The two brothers ask Merlin to abide with them, and to assist them at all times (48). He agrees to help them when they have need, and so takes his leave (49). Shortly afterwards Merlin tells the King how to take

a castle he is besieging, and how to rid his land of the Sarazins (50). The plan is successful, and the land is freed.

Notwithstanding Merlin's services there is a baron at court who envies him and resolves to prove the falsity of his divinations (51). The baron feigns illness, disguises himself in three different ways, and with each disguise asks Merlin what death he is to die. Merlin replies that he will break his neck, that he will be hanged, and that he will be drowned (52). The baron calls Merlin a fool, but the prophecy is fulfilled to the letter. Then Merlin goes to Blase. But the King and all who hear thereof say there is nowhere so wise a man as Merlin, and they resolve to write down all that he says. In this way is begun the Book of the Prophecies of Merlin (53).<sup>1</sup>

When Merlin returns to court, he advises the King to make a great feast, and to prepare for the arrival of the Sarazins (54). He does so, and goes out to meet the enemy at Salisbury (56). All the Sarazins are killed, but Pendragon falls as Merlin has prophesied. Uter buries the dead Christians, and is then crowned at Logres (57). Merlin, who has meanwhile revisited Blase, returns to the King, constructs a golden dragon as a rallying point in battle, and brings over from Ireland the great stones of Stonehenge (58). Then Merlin tells the King the story of the Grail and of the tables of our Lord and of Joseph of Arimathia, and advises him to construct at Cardoell in Wales a third table in the name of the Trinity (59).

## CHAPTER IV.

THE FEASTS AT CARDOELL; UTER-PENDRAGON'S LOVE FOR YGERNE, AND HIS WAR WITH HER HUSBAND THE DUKE OF TINTAGEL.

THE King follows the advice of Merlin, who selects fifty knights to sit at the table, and leaves one place void (60). Then Merlin departs and goes to Blase (61). Three years pass before he returns to court; and the rumour spreads that Merlin is dead (62). At Pentecost great feasts are held at Cardoell. A doubting knight sits

<sup>1</sup> This forms the third volume of the folio edition of the *Merlin*, Paris, 1498. It has properly nothing to do with the romance, though it may be regarded as a sort of continuation of the *Merlin*.

in the void place and sinks down like lead (63). Then Merlin comes to court, and advises the King to hold all high feasts at Cardoell. Among the guests are the Duke of Tintagel and his wife Ygerne (64). The King is struck with her beauty, and sends jewels to all the ladies at the feast. At Easter is another feast, and the King repeats his gifts. When all the guests have departed, the King's anguish increases because of his hopeless love for Ygerne. Soon he ordains another feast (65), and sends by the hand of Bretel a golden cup to Ygerne (67). The lady reddens with shame, but the Duke, thinking no evil, orders her to receive it, and she obeys. After the feast the Duke finds her weeping, and learns of the designs of the King (68). Full of wrath he summons his men, and leaves the court without ceremony. The King is angry in his turn, and demands the return of the Duke (69), who refuses to come. Then the King invades the Duke's country (70). While the King is carrying on the war, Merlin appears as an old man (72), then as a blind cripple (73), and finally assumes his real form (74). Merlin promises to help the King to enjoy Ygerne on condition that the King will give him anything he may ask for (75). Then Merlin transforms the King, Ulfín, and himself into the semblance of the Duke, Jordan, and Bretel (76). They come to the castle of Tintagel, where the King spends the night with Ygerne, and in the morning they depart in haste (77). Merlin demands the child which shall be born of Ygerne, and the King consents. Then they ride on till they come to a river, where they wash and resume their own forms. When the King meets his men he learns of the death of the Duke, and says he is "right sorry" (78).

## CHAPTER V.

### MARRIAGE OF THE KING WITH YGERNE; BIRTH OF ARTHUR AND DEATH OF THE KING.

At a council it is decided that the King shall marry Ygerne (85). Her friends consent with tears of joy; and the King weds the lady twenty days after he had lain by her in her chamber (86). Months pass by, until one night the King asks Ygerne who is the father of the child she is bearing. She tells him that a man had lain with

her in the semblance of the Duke. The King assures her that he is the father, and gets her to promise to dispose of the child as he shall ordain (87). In due time the child is born (90) and delivered to Antor, a worthy knight whom Merlin designates (91). The child is the famous Arthur.

For a long time Uter-Pendragon rules the land, till at length he falls in a "great sickness of the gout in hands and feet." Then the Danes rise against him. But by Merlin's advice the King is borne into the battle in a litter, and wins the victory (94). After this he divides his treasure, and after long illness dies and is buried with much pomp (95). As the land is left without heir, the barons and prelates of the church come together to take counsel who shall be their king.

## CHAPTER VI.

### ARTHUR MADE KING.

IN their doubt all turn to Merlin, and ask him to seek out a man that may govern the realm (96). Says Merlin: "Let us wait till Yule, and pray to our Lord to send a rightful governor." They agree, and assemble in the church at Yule (97). After "making meekly their orisons to our Lord," they come out of the church, and see a great stone in which is fixed an anvil, and through the anvil a sword (98). The Archbishop explains that he who draws out the sword shall be king, and lets all the lords try in their turn for eight days (100). Last of all the boy Arthur comes to the stone and takes out the sword as lightly as though nothing had held it (104). The barons are not quite satisfied, and ask that the sword be left in the stone till Easter. When they are all assembled at Easter, they ask for a further delay till Pentecost (105), and so they wait till the Whitsuntide (106). Then on Whitsun even the Archbishop makes Arthur knight. On the morrow Arthur is arrayed in the royal vestments, and all go in procession to the stone, from which the young king draws out the sword. After he is consecrated and anointed, and the service is ended, they all look for the stone, but it has vanished. Thus is Arthur chosen king, and he holds the realm of Logres long in peace (107).



## CHAPTER VII.

## REVOLT OF THE BARONS; AND DEFEAT OF THE SEVEN KINGS BY ARTHUR.

AFTER the middle of August Arthur holds a great court, to which come the kings of the neighbouring realms with their knights—King Loth of Orcanye, and King Urien of Gorre, a young king much praised in arms; King Ventres of Garlot, the husband of one of Arthur's sisters; King Carados Brenbras, lord of the land of Strangore and one of the knights of the Round Table; King Aguyzas of Scotland, a fresh young knight; and after him King Ydiers with four hundred knights. Arthur receives them with great honour, and loads them with rich gifts, but they disdain his presents, and refuse to have him as their lord (108). Arthur escapes from their hands; and fifteen days pass without event. Then Merlin enters the town, and is at once appealed to by the barons. Merlin tells them that the new king is more highly born than they, and advises them to send for Arthur, Ulfyn, the counsellor of Uter-Pendragon, and Antor, the supposed father of Arthur (109). The barons consent. When the three arrive, the Archbishop begins to speak (110), but gives place to Merlin, who tells the whole story of the birth of Arthur (111), and of his being reared by Antor (112). The people are satisfied, but the barons declare that they will never have a bastard for king, and depart in great wrath to arm themselves (113). Merlin reasons with them, but to no purpose. Then he comforts Arthur (114), and advises him to help King Leodegan, who is at war with King Rion, the king of the Land of Giants and of the Land of Pastures (115). Arthur shall marry the daughter of King Leodegan. Before his departure, Arthur fills the fortresses with men and provisions, and makes ready against the barons. Merlin constructs a flaming dragon, sets it on a spear, and gives it to Kay to bear as a standard (116). When the battle begins Merlin casts his enchantments, and sets fire to the pavilions of the enemy. Then Arthur attacks them, and, though set upon by the seven kings all at once (118), he wins the victory, for neither horse nor man can endure against Arthur's sword Calibourne (120).

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE MISSION OF ULFIN AND BRETTEL TO KING BAN AND KING BORS.

AFTER Arthur's victory over the seven kings he returns to Cardoell. Then he provisions his castles, towns, and cities, and afterwards holds court at Logres, his chief city, 'that is now called London' (120). After dubbing three hundred knights he listens to the counsels of Merlin, who tells of his own wonderful birth and then of Arthur's. Queen Ygerne, says Merlin, had five daughters by the Duke of Tintagel, and two more by a previous husband. Of these maidens King Loth has married one; King Ventres of Garlot, another; King Urien, the third; Briadas, the fourth—now dead. The fifth is yet at school (121). King Loth has five sons, the eldest of whom is Gawein. King Ventres has a son named Galeshyn; and King Urien, a son named Ewein the Gaunt.

In Little Britain, continues Merlin, are two kings, who are brothers—Ban of Benoyk, and Bors of Gannes (122). They are warred upon by Claudas, an evil king, and ought to be allies of Arthur. After giving this advice Merlin says he will repair to forests and wildernesses, but will be at hand in case of need (123).

Arthur therefore sends Ulfin and Bretel to ask King Ban and King Bors to come to Logres at Hallowmass (124). The messengers find the two kings in the midst of war with Claudas, but in a great battle the brothers win the victory. Ulfin and Bretel ride direct to the castle of Trebes and ask for King Ban, but he is with his brother at Benoyk (125). As the messengers ride forth they are set upon by seven knights (126), but Ulfin and Bretel overcome them, and go their way (127). On their arrival at Benoyk (128), they announce their message (129) and receive the promise of the assistance of Ban and Bors (130).

## CHAPTER IX.

## THE VISIT OF KING BAN AND KING BORS TO ARTHUR; THE TOURNAMENT AT LOGRES.

WHILE the messengers are still absent Merlin tells Arthur that they are returning with the two kings, and advises him to receive

them with honour (131). By Arthur's command the city of Logres is hung with cloths of silk, and the streets strewed with fine grass. Incense and myrrh are burned; and in the windows are many lights (132). Then the guests enter the minster in solemn procession, and return to the palace for the banquet (133). A grand tournament follows, in which Gifflet the son of Do, Lucas the butler, and Kay the steward, perform great deeds (135). When all is over the conversation turns upon the alliance; and Merlin tells the two kings that Arthur ought to be their lord (139).

## CHAPTER X.

THE BATTLE BETWEEN ARTHUR AND THE REBEL KINGS AT BREDIGAN.

KING Ban and King Bors follow Merlin's advice and do homage to Arthur (140). Merlin gives them wise counsel, and tells of Gonnore, daughter of King Leodegan of Carmelide, and of King Bion who is warring against him, and urges them to spend a year or two with Leodegan (141). They agree, and begin to make great preparations.

Meanwhile, the seven kings who had been defeated at Clarion prepare to take vengeance on Arthur and his enchanter Merlin. In great force they advance, accompanied by four other kings and a duke, and engage in battle with Arthur and his allies in the forest of Bredigan. Thousands are left dead on the field, but the rebels are beaten, and forced to flee for their lives (165). Merlin then departs from Arthur and goes to Blase (166).

## CHAPTER XI.

THE DOINGS OF KING ARTHUR AFTER THE BATTLE, AND HIS DEPARTURE FOR TAMELIDE (CARMELIDE).

AFTER the battle Arthur causes all the plunder to be put together in a heap, and then the three kings divide it among their followers (167). On the morrow, after they have feasted, they see a great churl coming through the meadows by the river with a bow in his hand. The fowls which he shoots he gives to King Arthur. No one knows the churl but Ulfin and Bretel (169), and they tell the King that it is Merlin.

Then there is joy in the King's heart, for he is sure that Merlin loves him (170).

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE RETURN OF THE REBEL KINGS TO THEIR CITIES, AND THEIR ENCOUNTER WITH THE SAXONS.<sup>1</sup>

WHILE Arthur and his followers abide at Bredigan in "joy and solace" till the Lenten season, the rebel kings return full of "sorrow and heaviness" to their own cities. While on their way they enter the city of Sorhant, a town of King Urien (171). Here they learn of the ravages of the Saxons (172). In consternation they hold a council and agree to help one another. They learn that Arthur and Ban and Bors have gone to the help of Leodegan, but that the fortresses are prepared for war (175). While the kings are making ready, and the Saxons have already arrived, we may turn for a moment to Galeshyn, son of King Ventres, and nephew to King Arthur (177). One day Galeshyn questions his mother about her parents and her brother Arthur. She tells him the whole story, and then he goes to his chamber resolved to be one of Arthur's knights, and sends a messenger to Gawein, asking to meet him at Newerk, the third day after Easter (178).

The rest of the chapter relates the story of Arthur's amour with his sister, Loth's wife, the fruit of which is Mordred (180); tells of Gawein the son of Loth, and how he questions his mother about Arthur and says that he will be made a knight only by Arthur (181-184); and gives a further account of the movements of the Saxons.

## CHAPTER XIII.

GAWEIN and his brothers Agravayn, Gaharet, and Gaheries, meet Galeshyn at Newerk in Brochelonde (189). They engage in repeated battles with the Saxons, but finally arrive at Logres (201).

<sup>1</sup> I shall make no excuse for abridging as much as possible the intolerably prolix account of the wars with the Saxons. The story is in each case essentially the same. Each king when attacked assembles his men and delivers battle. Hosts are killed, and there is "battle grete and stour mortell," while Saxons are "slitte to the teth," but there is exceedingly little in the long-winded recital that can interest a modern reader.

## CHAPTER XIV.

EXPEDITION OF ARTHUR, BAN, AND BORS TO AID LEODEGAN AT TAMELIDE  
(CARMELIDE).

WHEN the three kings arrive at Tamelide Leodegan receives them well, though he does not know who they are (203). He accepts their proffered aid (204), and prepares his hosts to go out against the invaders of his land (205). As may be expected, Leodegan and his allies gain the victory (223). After the battles, the kings divide the spoil (224), and Leodegan gives a great feast. Gonnore, the daughter of the King, serves at table and wins the heart of Arthur (227), for of all the ladies in the Bloy Breteyne she is the wisest and the fairest and the best beloved except Helayn, the daughter of Pelles, who had the keeping of the Saint-Graal (229).

## CHAPTER XV.

## EXPLOITS OF THE REBEL KINGS AGAINST THE SAXONS.

THE Saxons sweep over the country with fire and sword and slay the inhabitants without pity, but the Britons resist like brave men and inflict terrible punishment upon the invaders. The battle still rages as the tale turns to speak of Merlin and Arthur (231-257).

## CHAPTER XVI.

MERLIN'S JOURNEY TO LOGRES AND VISIT TO GAWAIN. ENCOUNTER BETWEEN  
THE CHILDREN AND ORIENX.

GREAT is the joy in the town of Toraise, in Tamelide, where Arthur is highly honoured by Leodegan and his daughter Gonnore (257). One day Merlin tells the three kings that he must return to Logres, but that he will be with them again before they have another battle (258). After visiting Blase (259), Merlin takes the form of an old man (261), and goes to Camelot, where Gawain and his brothers are awaiting the Saxons. The old man calls him a coward for not going to the help of Seigramore, the nephew of the Emperor of Constantinople, who has come to take arms of Arthur (263). Gawain leaps at once to horse and rides forth with four thousand men. When

they draw near, they find Seigramore and the children giving fierce battle to the Saxons. The fresh warriors smite the Saxons (264), and Gawein unhorses Orienx their leader (265). Then they return with joy to Camelot (268), but the old man has departed, and they believe he has been slain (270).

## CHAPTER XVII.

RAVAGES OF THE SAXONS IN THE LANDS OF KING CLARION AND DUKE ESCAM.

THE Saxons make another descent, but are driven back with great loss, and Duke Escam sends half of the plunder to King Clarion (271-277).

## CHAPTER XVIII.

ADVENTURES OF GAWEIN AND HIS FELLOWS AT ARONDELL IN CORNWALL.

GAWEIN, with an army of thirty thousand men, sets out for Bredigan (278). When he arrives, a churl, who of course is Merlin, gives him letters purporting to be from the sons of Urien (279), asking his aid ; and Gawein at once leads out his men in six divisions (280). Meanwhile Ydiers and the two sons of Urien are routed by the Saxons. Then Gawein's company arrives, and after repeated fierce combats drives the Saxons from the field (294). Then comes an old man on horseback and says, "Gawein, return again and bring with thee all thy fellows into Arondell, for, lo! here come Saxons in great number, and we may not endure them" (294). Gawein follows his advice, and from the city walls looks down upon the Saxons (295). While Gawein and his followers are feasting that night, a knight in torn hauberk gallops up to the castle and cries out, "Who is the squire that dares follow me on an adventure?" Gawein answers, and asks which way he will go, but the knight replies vaguely, taunting him with cowardice.

Gawein says that though he die he will hold him company (297). With seven thousand men he sallies forth, and rides all day and night till he meets a squire on horseback with a child in a cradle. The squire says that he is fleeing with the child of King Loth, and that the mother is in the hands of the Saxons (298). Gawein

gallops off, rescues his mother (299) and conducts her to Arondell and then to Logres (301). Do of Cardoell receives them with great honour, and tells Gawein that all the warnings have been given by Merlin, the best diviner that ever was or will be, and that Merlin had assumed the three forms under which Gawein had seen him (302).

## CHAPTER XIX.

MERLIN'S MEETING WITH LEONCES. HIS ADVENTURES WITH NIMIANE.

AFTER Gawein has rescued his mother, the knight who brings him the news, and who is none other than Merlin, goes to Blase (303), relates all these things, prophesies darkly, and says that God has given him wit to accomplish the adventures of the Saint-Graal (304). After this, Merlin departs into the realm of Benoyk, and comes to Leonces, the Lord of Paerne (305). He warns the King of the coming war, and advises him to make ready against Claudas and Frolles. Merlin then leaves Leonces, and goes to see Nimiane, a maiden of great beauty, the daughter of Dionas (307). In the form of a fair young squire he meets her at a fountain in the forest (308), asks her who she is, and tells her that for her love he will show her wonderful things (309). Then he conjures up a company of knights and ladies, singing and dancing, and a fair orchard wherein is all manner of fruit and flowers (310). Nimiane asks him to teach her some of his skill, and promises him her love (311). At this Merlin tells her much, which she writes upon parchment; and then he joins the kings at Tamelide (312).

## CHAPTER XX.

MEETING OF THE PRINCES AT LEICESTER; RETURN OF MERLIN TO THE COURT OF LEODEGAN; BETROTHAL OF ARTHUR AND GONNORE; AND GREAT BATTLE WITH KING RION AND THE GIANTS.

WHEN the rebel princes meet at Leicester, they agree to go out against the Saxons, and choose for their camp the banks of the Severn (313).

Meanwhile Merlin has returned to Toraise, in Tamelide, and advises the three kings—Ban, Bors, and Arthur—to go to Leodegan

and bid him prepare for battle with King Rion (314). They do not fathom his dark prophecies (315), but they follow his counsel. Leodegan is greatly troubled at the invasion of his land (318); but Merlin comforts him, and tells him that his guest is King Arthur, and that the young King desires Gonnore for his queen (319). With joy Leodegan leads in his daughter, richly clad, and presents her to Arthur. After a night of feasting the King arrays his army for the battle (321). Gonnore herself helps Arthur to put on his armour, and receives a kiss for her reward (323). Then the host rides forth, surprises the army of Rion, and so begins the battle (324). Everywhere are fierce single combats, but the result of the battle is doubtful till Arthur encounters Rion, and finally puts him to flight (342-345). Then the Christians chase the giants, and so win the victory (357). With great spoil they return to Toraise, and then, after two days, Arthur takes leave of Gonnore, and, accompanied by Merlin and twenty thousand soldiers, passes into Benoyk. Ban sends a message to his brother King Bors, asking him to come to Bredigan (360).

## CHAPTER XXI.

ADVENTURES OF BAN AND GUYNEBANS ; BORS' FIGHT WITH AMAUNT ;  
MEETING OF THE CHILDREN WITH KING ARTHUR.

KING Ban and his brother Guynebans enter the Forest Perilous, and there see knights and ladies in a meadow closed about with woods (361). For the love of a maiden Guynebans "makes dances to enter," and teaches her the secret of his enchantments. When Ban departs, Guynebans accompanies him, but afterwards returns to his lady, and abides with her all his life (363).

In obedience to the message of King Ban, King Bors sets out for Bredigan (364), and on the way engages in battle with King Amaunt, whom he kills in single combat (368). Accompanied by the knights of the dead king, he rides on to Bredigan, and there presents them to Arthur, to whom they do homage (369). After three days they go into the forest in search of a great treasure of which Merlin has told them. When it is found they all set out for Logres. As they are riding forth, Gawain and his company learn that Arthur and his



host are near, and go to meet him. Merlin knows of their coming, and makes Arthur and the two kings "alight under a fair tree" to await them (370).

Gawein and his followers kneel before King Arthur, who commands them to rise and promises to knight them. Again they kneel and thank him (372), while Gawein tells his name, and presents his companions. Arthur makes Gawein constable of his household (373), and then all ride forth to Logres. That night the children hold vigil in the minster, and on the morrow they are dubbed by Arthur with his good sword Calibourne (374). After the great court which Arthur holds for three days, Merlin tells the King to make ready his host to move at midnight against the invaders of Benoyk. Gawein follows the King's commands, and when he enters again, he learns all that he has owed to Merlin (376). As the host makes ready the ships at Dover, Merlin departs for Northumberland, and recounts to Blase all that has happened (378).

## CHAPTER XXII.

### BATTLE BEFORE THE CASTLE OF TREBES.

IN the month of June Arthur and the two kings take ship and come to Rochelle. On the morrow at midday, Merlin joins them (379). Meanwhile the invaders gather about the castle of Trebes and besiege it on four sides (380). When Arthur and his host arrive there is a great battle, Merlin casts his enchantments and discomfits the enemy with flames of fire in the air, while Kay bears the dragon which vomits fire. Arthur and the two kings, and Gawein and the knights of the Round Table perform marvels, and finally chase the besiegers from the field (411).

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### THE DREAM OF THE WIFE OF KING BAN; THE DREAM OF JULIUS CÆSAR, EMPEROR OF ROME.

ALL the night there is feasting in the castle of Trebes (412). When the two kings Ban and Bors have gone to rest with their wives, Queen Helayne, the wife of King Ban, has a wonderful dream, which

she relates to him (413). After the first mass, to which they both go, King Ban falls asleep and hears a voice speaking to him (415). He and the Queen fear greatly, but do not at once ask Merlin the meaning of the dreams. Arthur meanwhile ravages the lands of Claudas, who afterwards, however, conquers the two kings, but is finally driven out of the land by Arthur (416). One day Ban asks Merlin the meaning of the dreams. Merlin explains a part, and then goes to Nimiane his love (417). Meanwhile Gawein ravages the lands of Claudas, returns to Benoyk; and then with Arthur and the two kings takes ship at Rochelle to return to Carmelide (419).

Merlin leaves them and goes through the forests to Rome, where Julius Cæsar is Emperor (420). The Emperor has a strange dream which he keeps to himself, but he sits at meat pensive among his barons. Suddenly Merlin in the form of a great hart dashes into the palace, and falling on his knees before the Emperor says that a savage man will explain the dream (423). In a moment he has vanished. The Emperor in wrath promises his daughter to anyone who will bring the hart or the savage man. Now, the Emperor has a steward named Grisandol, who, though a maiden, has come to the court in the disguise of a squire. To her the hart appears in the forest, and shortly afterwards the savage man (424). He allows himself to be taken in his sleep (425) and brought before the Emperor (427), to whom he explains the dream (430), showing that the vision means that the Empress has twelve youths disguised as maidens, with whom she disports at pleasure, and advising the Emperor to marry Grisandol (433), who is a maiden in disguise. The Emperor follows the advice of the savage man, who, of course, is Merlin, and lives happily with his new wife, after burning the old one (437).

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### BATTLE BETWEEN THE TWELVE KINGS AND THE SAXONS BEFORE THE CITY OF CLARENCE.

MERLIN now goes to Blase and relates all that has happened. By this time the twelve princes and the duke are assembled to go out against the Saxons (438). A great battle is fought before the city,

but the Saxons are too strong for the Christians, and chase them from the field (446). Then the Saxons burn and destroy whatever they find, and so terrify the kings that they dare not venture again to fight the invaders (447).

## CHAPTER XXV.

### ARTHUR'S MEETING WITH LEODEGAN; MARRIAGE OF ARTHUR AND GONNORE.

ARTHUR and his company arrive in Great Britain (447), and ride to Carmelide, where Leodegan and Gonnore are awaiting them. The marriage is arranged to take place at the end of a week (449). Meanwhile the rebel kings learn of the knighting of the sons of Loth, Urien, and the others, of the arrival of Loth's wife at Logres, and of Arthur's victories. Then they are sorry for their rebellion, but King Loth plots to steal away Arthur's wife, and to put in her place Gonnore, the step-daughter of Cleodalis,<sup>1</sup> with whose wife Leodegan had long lived in adultery (451). Merlin learns of the plot and prepares to frustrate it (452). When the day of the wedding arrives, all march in solemn procession to the minster and witness the ceremony (453). After meat the knights ride forth to a tournament before the city. None can stand against Gawein, who ceases only when Merlin tells him he has done enough (461). When the tournament is over Arthur creates Gawein a knight of the Round Table (462). After the feast that night the conspirators who come with the false Gonnore, seize Queen Gonnore as she goes out into the garden (463). But Bretel and Ulfu, who are there by Merlin's advice, rescue her from their hands (464) and deliver her to Leodegan (465). Then Arthur goes to his wife, "and there they lead merry life together as they that well love" (466). On the following day Leodegan banishes the false Gonnore. Her stepfather Cleodalis takes her away, and leaves her in an abbey that stands in a wild place, where she remains till Bertelak finds her (468).

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Merlin*, chap. xiv. p. 213.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

BANISHMENT OF BERTELAK ; FIGHT AND RECONCILIATION BETWEEN ARTHUR AND LOTH ; ARTHUR'S COURT AT LOGRES ; VOWS OF THE KNIGHTS OF THE ROUND TABLE AND THE QUEEN'S KNIGHTS ; THE TOURNAMENT.

ON account of a knight that Bertelak has killed he is banished (470). He rides forth until he comes to the abbey in which Gonnore is staying, and there abides a long time, plotting revenge on Leodegan and Arthur. Eight days after his marriage, Arthur, with his Queen and five hundred men at arms, sets out for Bredigan, having sent Gawein to Logres to make ready the city for the court of August (471). King Loth is lying in wait for Arthur, and attacks him with seven hundred men (473). There is a fierce fight, but in the midst of it Gawein comes up with four-score fellows, and Kay bearing the banner (475). Gawein unhorses his father Loth, makes known who he is, and compels Loth to do homage to Arthur (477). So all ride together to Logres, where Arthur gives rich gifts to his followers (479).

In the middle of August begins Arthur's court, where all the knights and ladies appear in their most splendid robes (480). The knights of the Round Table take a vow to aid any maiden in distress (481). Then Gawein and his fellows, who pray to be the knights of the Queen, vow that one of them shall go to the help of any man or woman who appeals for assistance, and on returning shall relate whatever adventures may befall him (483). When the vows are made, the knights prepare for a grand tournament with five hundred knights on each side (484). As may be expected, they finish with a quarrel. Gawein lays about him with an apple-tree club (493), then draws his sword and kills more than forty. Fighting follows, and the tournament comes to an end. Finally, King Arthur reproves Gawein (500), and brings about a reconciliation. The knights of the Round Table, kneeling, beg forgiveness of Gawein, and agree not to tourney again with the Queen's knights (502).

## CHAPTER XXVII.

THE MISSION OF KING LOTH AND HIS FOUR SONS TO MAKE TRUCE WITH  
THE REBEL KINGS; BATTLES WITH THE SAXONS.

AFTER the tournament is a great feast, where King Arthur and King Ban, and King Bors, and King Loth, sit in state at the high dais (504). When the tables are removed the four kings withdraw to a chamber by themselves. Then Loth begins to speak of the Saxons, and says that with the help of the other princes, Arthur could chase the heathen out of the land (505). All agree that Loth is the best messenger to treat with the rebel kings, and he consents to go to them with his four sons (506). At midnight they set out, choosing the unfrequented paths, and so ride for eight days, having a fight on the way with seven thousand Saxons. They kill a goodly number of the heathen, and at nightfall arrive at a forester's house, which is strongly fortified and encircled by deep ditches full of water, and by great oaks and thick bushes (517). They are most hospitably received, and pass the evening in talk till bedtime (519).

While they are asleep, we may speak a moment of King Pelles of Lytenoys (520). This king has a fair son who wishes to be squire to Gawein at the court of King Arthur. The King consents and sends forth his son fully armed and accompanied by a single squire (521). The two meet with the Saxons and defend themselves as best they can, but they are in great straits, and there we will leave them for a time (524).

In the morning King Loth and his sons ride forth, and as they pass by a woodside they see the squire coming down the hill (528). He tells them that his lord is in the hands of the Saxons, and begs their help. They at once attack the Saxons (530) and rescue the King's son (534); but Gaheries and Agravain quarrel, and Gawein has to interfere (537). Then the company ride on towards Roestok, not finding shelter till after midnight, when they arrive at a hermitage (539). Suddenly Gawein and the King's son, whose name is Elizer, hear the cries of a lady in distress. They sally forth and rescue her and a knight (541). The lady is sister to the lady of Roestok, and

the knight is her cousin (543). They now join King Loth, and all go together to the Castle of Roestok, where the lord receives them with joy (545) and agrees to deliver Loth's message to the King de Cent Chevaliers, bidding him come in September to Arestuell, in Scotland (546). As they ride forth in the morning they find Duke Escam beset by ten thousand Saxons near Cambenyk (547), and at once put themselves at his service (548). In the great battle which follows the Saxons are routed (553). Then Duke Escam and his guests ride to Cambenyk (555). When he learns of Loth's mission to the princes he agrees to accompany Loth to Arestuell. Loth asks the Duke to send messengers to the other princes that they also may come to Arestuell (557). Loth and his company await for several days the other princes at Arestuell (558). They arrive one after another, and hold a great council. Gawein asks them to consent to a truce, so as to fight the Saxons together. The princes turn to Loth and learn with surprise that he has already done homage to Arthur (559). They, however, agree finally to the truce, which they say they will keep only till they have driven out the Saxons. Then they depart, gather their people, and go to the plain of Salisbury (560).

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

ADVENTURES OF SEIGRAMORE, GALASHYN, AND DODINELL; MERLIN'S VISITS TO BLASE AND TO THE PRINCES; ARTHUR'S PREPARATIONS FOR THE WAR.

ARTHUR and his knights are glad when they learn the result of Loth's mission. On the morning of the day after the news comes, three knights of Arthur's court, Seigramore, Galashyn, and Dodinell, rise early and go into the forest in search of adventures (561). Three knights of the Round Table, Agravandain, Mynoras, and Monevall, disguise themselves and leave the court in the hope of meeting the first three knights and trying their mettle. When they arrive at a point where three roads separate, each chooses his way and rides off alone.

Meanwhile Merlin, who left Arthur in Carmelide,<sup>1</sup> goes to Blase and recounts all that has happened since Arthur's marriage—the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 472.

story of the false Gonnore, of Gawein's exploits and the submission of King Loth to Arthur, of the great tournament, and of the truce to which the princes have agreed at Arestuell (562). Blase writes all this in his book; and then Merlin begins to prophesy darkly (563). After taking leave of Blase he goes into Little Britain, tells Leonces and Pharien to go with much people to the plain of Salisbury (564), then visits Nimiane (565) and various princes whom he bids also go to Salisbury, and finally arrives at Logres (566). All are rejoiced to see him, and listen eagerly to his account of the allies who are gathering at Salisbury. Then Merlin asks: "When I came thus suddenly upon you right now what did ye behold so intently down the meadows?" Says the King: "We looked on three knights that we saw enter into the forest." Merlin replies: "Wit it verily, that it be three knights of the Round Table in great need of succour" (567). At this the King sends without delay Sir Ewein, Gifflet, and Kay to their rescue (568). The knights have meanwhile met and fought with one another (569). Sir Ewein, Gifflet, and Kay arrive just as the knights are in the thick of the fight, and put an end to it (571). Then all ride together to court. In the talk which follows, Ban says that Sir Gawein is the best knight, and all agree that it is true (573).

After meat the King sends forth the messengers, summoning his people to Salisbury (574), and on the morrow the King and his men ride forth, with Kay bearing the great banner. Spies of the Saxons watch the host as it assembles at Salisbury, and guard against a surprise (575).

## CHAPTER XXIX.

PARLIAMENT OF THE PRINCES AT SALISBURY; THEIR HOMAGE TO ARTHUR;  
AND DEFEAT OF THE SAXONS.

WHEN the princes have all arrived at Salisbury, Merlin tells Arthur that so many good knights shall not be assembled again till the father slay the son and the son the father. After another dark prophecy which Arthur does not understand Merlin sends the King to the barons (579). They tell him as he thanks them for their assistance

that they are not his men, but that they are come to defend holy church. "God requite you," says Arthur, "in whose honour and reverence ye do it." "Amen," say the lords, "and be it so as ye will" (580).

When the twelve princes come to Loth's tent, they hold a stormy council, and all declare that they will not make peace with Arthur; but when the King enters with Ban and Bors and the strange princes, the twelve do him reverence, for he is a king anointed (581). After Arthur has addressed them, Loth says that they must follow the counsel of Merlin, and to this they agree (582). When the assembly is dismissed Elizer comes to Gawein, and kneeling before him prays to be made a knight. Gawein grants his request (583), and Arthur bestows upon him the richest arms in his coffers. On the morrow Elizer sits at the King's table between Ban and Bors, and in the jousting which follows wins much praise (584).

Next day the host rides forth from the plain of Salisbury, Merlin leading the way to the city of Clarence (585). Before the city of Garlot they meet with the Saxons, defeat them here (597) and at Clarence, and drive them into the sea (602).

## CHAPTER XXX.

### DEPARTURE OF BAN AND BORS, AND THEIR VISIT TO AGRAVADAIN.

JOYFUL over the victory, Arthur and his host with Ban and Bors and Loth and Gawein return to Camelot (603). Then by Merlin's advice Ban and Bors, accompanied by the magician, set out for their own country. As they ride toward the sea, they arrive before a great castle closed round with seven walls and defended by five high towers (604). They cross the surrounding marsh by the causeway, and sound an ivory horn which is hung by a silver chain to the branch of a pine-tree (605). Three times Ban blows the horn without result. Again he blows three times. Then in wrath Agravadain, the lord of the castle, demands what they want and who they are. On learning that their lord is King Arthur, he makes them welcome (606). In the castle are three maidens of great beauty, the



fairest of whom is the daughter of Agravadain. Merlin by enchantment causes her and Ban to fall in love (607), and transforms himself into a young knight, who comes kneeling before King Ban (608). After supper they go to bed, and by the enchantment of Merlin, all sleep soundly except Ban and the maiden. Then Merlin comes and conducts her to King Ban (609), with whom she stays till day dawns. Merlin leads the maiden again to her bed, and breaks the enchantment (610). All arise, and the two kings prepare to depart, King Ban taking a tender leave of the maiden, and telling her that the son she has conceived will bring her joy and honour (611). With that they continue their journey till they come to Benoyk. Then Merlin leaves them and visits Nimiane his love and Blase his master, to whom he recounts all that has happened (612).

### CHAPTER XXXI.

ARTHUR'S GREAT FEAST AT CAMELOT ; THE BATTLE BEFORE TORAISE ;  
AND THE DEFEAT OF KING RION.

AFTER the departure of the two kings, Arthur remains at Camelot, and there gives a magnificent feast (613). On the second day, when Arthur and Gonnore and the twelve kings with their queens are seated at the high dais, there enters a blind harper, clad in samite and girt with a baldric of silk, garnished with gold and precious stones. On a silver harp, with golden strings, he harps a lay of Britain so sweetly that Kay, the steward, pauses to listen (615).

Suddenly a strange knight enters, and asks Kay which is the King Arthur. Then he delivers to the King a letter with which he has been entrusted by Rion (619). Arthur gives it to the Archbishop, who breaks the ten seals and reads. Rion, the lord of all the west, announces that he has conquered nine kings, and furred with their beards a mantle of red samite. Nothing is lacking but the tassels, and to furnish these Arthur is commanded to send his beard with all the skin (620). King Arthur is wroth, and dismisses the messenger with the declaration that King Rion shall never have his beard. The knight departs; and then the harper harps merrily, and finally asks to bear the chief banner in the first battle (621). Arthur refuses

because the minstrel is blind. Ban alone suspects that the harper is Merlin, and asks the King to grant the request. As they talk together, the harper disappears, but a moment later re-enters the hall in the form of a little naked child, and again asks the King to deliver to him the banner (622). Arthur laughs, and consents. The child goes out of the palace, and reappears in the form of Merlin. Then the enchanter passes over the sea to Pharien and Leonce, and returning, visits Urien and Loth, summoning them all to the help of King Arthur (623). In a few days the two hosts stand facing each other (624), Merlin bearing the banner that cast out fire and flame (625). All perform prodigies of valour. Finally, Arthur and Rion meet in single combat (628). Arthur cuts off the giant's head (630), and so wins the victory. King Rion's barons submit to Arthur, and return with the body of the dead king into their own land. King Arthur and his host go to Toraise till he is healed of his wounds. Then they ride to Camelot, where the queens are awaiting them, and after four days separate, each man going to his own country, and King Arthur to Logres. Merlin also takes leave of the King, uttering as he goes a mysterious prophecy (631).

## CHAPTER XXXII.

MERLIN'S INTERPRETATION OF THE DREAM OF FLUALIS, AND HIS VISIT TO NIMIANE; THE KNIGHTING OF THE DWARF; THE EMBASSY FROM THE EMPEROR OF ROME; ARTHUR'S FIGHT WITH THE GIANT; THE BATTLE WITH THE ROMANS.

MERLIN passes with marvellous speed over land and sea, and comes to Flualis, King of Jerusalem, who has had a wonderful dream (632). Merlin, as usual, has no difficulty in explaining (633) what has puzzled all the wise men, and, without taking the King's daughter as his reward, he goes to Nimiane, who enchants him at her will (634). Merlin teaches her still more, and then departs and goes to Arthur at Logres, visiting Blase on the way in order to make his customary report (635). To this practice of his we owe this veracious chronicle. While King Arthur is sitting at the high days in the hall, there alights from a mule a lovely maiden with an ugly dwarf, whom

she helps down from her saddle and brings before the King. With a courteous salute she asks him to grant her a request (635). As he promises, she asks Arthur to knight her companion. Everyone laughs (636), but Arthur keeps his word, attires the dwarf in splendid armour, and makes him knight (637). As the damsel and the dwarf leave the palace, Merlin tells the King that the dwarf is a prince, and it shall soon be known who the maiden is (638).

While they are yet speaking, twelve princes arrive, with a letter from Luce, the Emperor of Rome (639), summoning Arthur before him for having withheld the service and tribute which he should pay, and for having dared to rise against Rome; threatening him in case of refusal with the loss of all Britain and the lands that do him homage, and with imprisonment. There is uproar in the palace when the letter is read; and Arthur withdraws with his princes and barons to prepare a reply (640). In his address Arthur says: "They claim Britain for theirs, and I claim Rome for mine" (642). His princes and barons agree that they must declare war upon Rome. Arthur gives his reply to the twelve messengers, and dismisses them with rich gifts (643).

When they have gone, Merlin tells Arthur to gather his people quickly, and then departs to warn the other princes. They come at once with thousands of knights (643), take ship and join Ban and Bors at Gannes (644).

In the night Arthur dreams of a bear and a dragon who fight together on a mountain, and the dragon slays the bear. Merlin explains to the King when he awakes that the bear is a giant, whom the King shall slay. As they begin their march they hear of the giant who has seized a maiden, and taken her to Mount St. Michel. Arthur at once bids Kay and Bediver make ready to set out about midnight (645). As they come to the mountain they see two great fires shining brightly. On approaching one of the fires, Bediver sees an old woman weeping beside a tomb (646). To his questions she replies: "The niece of Hoell of Nautes lies in this tomb, a victim to the lust of the giant, who now defiles me her nurse." As Bediver tells this to Arthur, the King goes softly against the giant with sword drawn, but the monster sees him coming, and meets him with a great club (648). They have

a stubborn fight, but Arthur finally kills him, and Bediver cuts off his head (649). They then return to the host, Bediver bearing the head at his saddle. The barons bless themselves when they see the head, and praise God for the King's victory. After crossing the river Aube their forces are increased by six thousand knights led by Ban and Bors. Then the King fortifies a castle to which he may retreat if need be (650), and sends Gawain, Seigramore, and Ewein with a message to the Emperor bidding him return home. Gawain delivers it defiantly (651), and smites off the head of a knight who says, "Britons can well menace, but at their deeds they are but easy." Then they leap to horse, striking down all who oppose them (652), and finally join a party of six thousand men whom Arthur has sent to their rescue (653). A battle follows in which the Romans are routed, and many of them taken prisoners (654). The Emperor is wroth at his defeat (656), and makes his people leap to horse, and comes to Logres with all his host. Arthur sends his army to the valley of Toraise, between Oston and Logres (658). In the battle which follows the Romans are chased from the field, and the Emperor Luce is slain. Arthur sends the body to Rome with the message that this is the tribute which Britain pays and is ready to pay again if more is required (664). Merlin then tells the King of a great cat full of the devil, which lives by the Lake of Losane (665).

### CHAPTER XXXIII.

ARTHUR'S FIGHT WITH THE GREAT CAT; THE SEARCH FOR MERLIN,  
AND HIS IMPRISONMENT; THE TRANSFORMATION OF GAWAIN INTO  
A DWARF, AND RETURN TO HIS PROPER FORM; THE BIRTH OF  
LANCELOT.

SAYS Merlin: "It befell four years ago that a fisher came to the Lake of Losane with his nets, and promised to give our Lord the first fish he should take. Twice he broke his vow, and the third time he drew out a little kitten as black as a coal. This he took home with him to kill the rats and mice, and kept it till it strangled him and his wife and his children, and after that fled to the mountains beyond the lake. And now it slays whomsoever it meets" (665).

Arthur at once makes ready to kill the beast, and rides off with five companions. They go up the mountain, and the King approaches the cave where the cat is. Merlin whistles; the cat rushes out and attacks the King (666). The fight is terrible (667), but the King gains the victory, and carries off the cat's feet in triumph.

The story now turns to speak of Arthur's knights who are taking to France the Roman prisoners with whom they are charged. Claudas, the old enemy of Ban and Bors, attacks the knights as they pass a castle of his (669), but Leonces and Pharien come to the rescue with seven hundred knights. The Britons win the day, and conduct their prisoners to Benoyk as Arthur has commanded (670).

The story returns to the castle of Agravadain where Ban and Bors and Merlin were so hospitably entertained.<sup>1</sup> Fifteen days after their visit, a rich knight named Leriador comes to the lord of the castle and asks for his daughter in marriage. She tells her father that she is too young (671), and finally confesses that she is with child by King Ban. Returning to the knight, her father asks him to wait two years, and then he shall have his will. At this the knight departs in wrath, without replying a word. Shortly after he returns with eight hundred knights and squires and yeomen, and lays siege to the castle (672). Agravadain vanquishes one after another the knights who come to joust with him (673), and finally Leriador himself, who acknowledges himself conquered and goes home into his own country again (674). In due time the maiden is delivered of a son, who afterwards wins great renown (675).

Meanwhile the direful dream which Merlin has expounded to Flualis<sup>2</sup> goes into effect. The King is terrified, renounces his paganism, and turns Christian, with his family (675). His four daughters marry four princes, and are blessed with fifty-four children, some of whom become knights of Arthur (676).

The story now returns to Arthur, who has routed the Romans and killed the great cat. After eight days of delay by the River Aube the King return with his army to Benoyk, and sends Gawein to destroy the castle of the March. This done, Gawein returns to

<sup>1</sup> Cf. chap. xxx.

<sup>2</sup> Chapter xxxii.

Benoyk (677). King Arthur then receives a message that Leodegan is dead, and on the morrow takes leave of Ban and Bors, never to see them again. On coming to Logres he comforts Queen Gonnore, and abides there long time with his knights and with Merlin (678). One day Merlin takes leave of the King and the Queen, sore weeping that he shall never see them again, and goes to Blase, to whom he recounts all that has happened. Of the dwarf that Arthur has knighted, Merlin says that he is a great gentleman and no dwarf by nature. After eight days Merlin takes leave of Blase and says: "This is the last time that I shall speak with you, for from henceforth I shall sojourn with my love, and never shall I have power to leave her, neither to come nor to go" (679).

Then he goes to Nimiane his love in the forest of Broceliande, and teaches her all his craft (680). She makes an enchantment of nine circles repeated nine times while Merlin is sleeping in her lap. And it seems to Merlin that he is in a strong fortress from which he can never come out. But Nimiane goes and comes as she likes, and has Merlin ever with her (681). After Merlin has been gone seven weeks, Arthur sends Gawein in search of him. The knight sets out with thirty others in a company. At a cross beside a forest they divide into three parties, and continue the search (682). Meanwhile the maiden and her dwarf, whom Arthur has dubbed, come to a forest. This they pass through, and, as they emerge, the damsel sees a knight coming armed upon a steed. The knight claims her for his love, but the dwarf defends her, unhorses the knight (683), and makes him promise to go to Arthur and recount his defeat (684).

And now the tale turns to Seigramoe and his nine knights who are searching for Merlin, but without success (687); then to Ewein and his knights, who also vainly seek Merlin (688) but meet the maiden and go to the assistance of the dwarf, who has overcome four knights and sent them to Arthur; last of all the story speaks of Gawein, who has separated from his knights and is continuing the search alone (689). As he is riding silently along, he meets a damsel splendidly mounted, and passes her without a salute. She stops her palfrey and tells him that he is a vile knight so to pass her without uttering a word. He begs her forgiveness, but she tells him to

remember another time to salute a lady or a damsel. For his punishment he shall be like the first man he meets (690). A little later, Gawein meets the damsel and the dwarf, and salutes her courteously. After going a short distance the dwarf changes to his original form, and becomes a young knight of great beauty, while Gawein becomes a dwarf (691). In this guise, however, he continues the quest for Merlin, going all through the realm of Logres and at length to Little Britain. As he is riding through the forest at Broceliande, he hears Merlin speaking, but cannot see him (692). Merlin says that he can never come forth from the place where he is, but that she who has enchanted him can come and go as she likes (693). Merlin comforts Gawein by telling him that he shall soon regain his form, and so he departs glad and sorrowful. As he rides on his way he again meets the damsel whom he had passed without saluting (694). She pretends to be struggling with two knights and cries to Gawein for help. He smites the knights (695) till the damsel cries, "Enough, Sir Gawein, do no more." Then on his promise never to fail to salute a lady she restores him to his original form. He kneels and says that he is her knight for evermore. After taking leave of her he rides to Cardoell, arriving at the time appointed, on the same day as Ewein and Seigramore. Then he tells all his adventures and the fate of Merlin (697).

Whilst they are rejoicing over Gawein, the damsel enters leading the knight who was a dwarf. She presents him to King Arthur, who makes him a companion of the Round Table. Then the story says no more of Arthur and his company, and turns to Ban and Bors. After Arthur takes leave of the two brothers they dwell with joy in Benoyk. To Ban is born a son who is surnamed Lancelot, and to Bors a son named Lyonel, and another called Bohort. All three win great renown by their prowess (698). After the birth of Bohort, Bors falls sick at Gannes, deprived of the help of Ban, who is kept at home by his enemies and finally conquered by the Romans, till he has only the Castle of Trebes left, and this he loses afterwards by the falsity of his seneschal whom he brought up from childhood (699).

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## IV.

## VARIOUS FORMS OF THE MERLIN LEGEND.

THE prose romance of *Merlin*, as we have it in our fifteenth-century English version, is a translation of a French prose romance which had assumed substantially its final shape early in the thirteenth century. The prose romance is but one of a variety of forms in which much of the material of the romance has been preserved. An enumeration of these forms will show to what extent this branch of the Arthurian legend entered into the literature of the Middle Ages and of later times. The arrangement according to language is not the best in all respects, for it groups together pieces produced under widely different conditions, but the practical convenience is considerable. In this account it will be desirable to give a list not only of the pieces that acquaint us with the history of Merlin, but also of such pieces as the prophecies and other works attributed to him. We can thus get at the outset a general view of the wide range of the legend, though we must reserve a number of questions relating to the Celtic, Latin, French, and English forms for more extended discussion in later sections. In such a sketch as this, exhaustive treatment is not attempted.

## A.—Celtic.

1.—A few Welsh poems purporting to belong to the sixth century contain an obscure account of a bard of the name of Myrddin. This name is the exact phonetic equivalent of the Merlin of the romances. Upon the direct development of the romance these poems, as we shall see, had no influence; but possibly some traits of character in the Merlin of the romances



are due to legends relating to Myrddin. The Breton ballads relating to Marzin have a very doubtful claim to antiquity. Some critics do not hesitate to pronounce them modern forgeries.<sup>1</sup>

2.—Of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* there exist Welsh translations, once supposed to be originals.

3.—The Irish translation of Nennius' *Historia Britonum*, though made in the eleventh century, was entirely without influence on the development of the legend.

### B.—Latin.

The Latin forms are for our purpose more important than the Celtic, even though the legend is essentially Celtic in many of its elements.

1.—Nennius, *Historia Britonum* (ninth century).

2.—Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Historia Regum Britanniae* (1135–1147). This repeats with considerable additions the story told by Nennius, and adds a large number of prophecies.

3.—*Gesta Regum Britanniae*.<sup>2</sup> This anonymous chronicle,<sup>3</sup> in more than 4500 Latin hexameters, follows closely Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia*, and only now and then reveals any individuality. The portion devoted to Merlin is included in verses 2052–3005.

4.—*Vita Merlini* (about 1148),<sup>4</sup> usually attributed to Geoffrey of Monmouth.

5.—*Prophecy of Merlin Silvester* (in ten lines), known as the *Prophecy of the Eagle to Edward the Confessor*. This and other<sup>5</sup> short prophecies attributed to Merlin Silvester, as well as the prophecy of Merlin Ambrose (Book VII. of Geoffrey's *Historia*), were often copied separately, and are preserved in

<sup>1</sup> Cf. i. 86.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Ward, *Catal. of Romances*, i. pp. 274–277; Kölbing, *Altenglische Bibl.* iv. p. cvii. This poem was published by Francisque Michel, Cambridge, 1862.

<sup>3</sup> It is hardly necessary to cite the various Latin chronicles in prose, as they are discussed later.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Ward, *Catal. of Romances*, i. pp. 278–288.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *ibid.* i. pp. 320–324.

numerous manuscripts.<sup>1</sup> (Ward, *Catal. of Romances*, i. pp. 292–338.)

6.—Prophecy about Scotland, in thirty leonines.<sup>2</sup> (Ward, *Catal. of Romances*, i. p. 299.)

7.—San-Marte (*Sagen von Merlin*, pp. 265–267) printed a Latin prophecy in sixty lines of halting dactylic hexameters (published also by Muratorius, *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, t. viii. pp. 1177–1178) attributed to Merlin, and belonging to the time of the Emperor Frederick II. This was one of a number of political prophecies directed against the Popes.<sup>3</sup>

8.—San-Marte also printed<sup>4</sup> twelve four-line stanzas of a Latin imitation of a Welsh war song, based largely on Geoffrey's *Historia*.

9.—A Latin version of the larger prose romance of *Merlin* was printed<sup>5</sup> in Venice in 1554.

10.—Besides the pieces above mentioned, the following are attributed by Bale and somewhat later by Fabricius to Merlin Ambrose<sup>6</sup>: 1. *Super arce Vortigerni*; 2. *Epitaphium sexti Regis*; 3. *Contra Vortigerni Magos*; 4. *Super quodam Cometa*.

As for the Latin commentary on the prophecies of Merlin

<sup>1</sup> The Prophecies possess interest for our immediate purpose only in so far as they show how powerfully the name of Merlin continued to influence the writers of successive generations, but I cannot discuss the questions which these singular productions suggest. In the works on Merlin by Francisque Michel and Villemarqué will be found enough to satisfy a reasonable curiosity in the matter. The Prophecies are referred to with more or less respect by a score of chroniclers, among whom we meet such names as Giraldus Cambrensis, Orderic Vital, Matthew Paris, Roger of Hoveden, William of Newburgh, Froissart, John Fordun, and others. The French *Prophéties de Merlin* are said to have been translated from the Latin. Cf. Ward, *Catal. of Romances*, i. pp. 371–373; P. Paris, *Les Romans de la Table Ronde*, i. p. 58.

<sup>2</sup> Printed in the Rolls ed. of Pierre de Langtoft's *Chronicle*, ii. pp. 450, 451. The MS. of the prophecy belongs to the 13th or the 14th century.

<sup>3</sup> For a further account of the influence of Merlin in Italy see Ward, *Catal. of Romances*, i. p. 372, where additional bibliographical references are given.

<sup>4</sup> *Sagen von Merlin*, pp. 207–209.

<sup>5</sup> Geoffrey's Latin Prophecies were first printed in Paris in 1508, and reprinted in 1517.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. F. Michel, *Vita Merlini*, p. lv.; Michel also calls attention to a fragment of four lines preserved by John Price in *Hist. Brit. Defensio*, p. 121.

by Alanus de Insulis,<sup>1</sup> and other Latin illustrative writings, they lie outside of our limits.

### C.—French.

1.—The first appearance in French literature of the Merlin legend is in translations of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia*.<sup>2</sup> Of these the earliest version was that of Geoffrey Gaimar, which has entirely disappeared. Most popular was the version by Wace, whose *Brut* appeared in 1155. Several other versions, some of which are preserved in fragmentary form, attest the popularity of the lively *Historia* of Geoffrey of Monmouth. The so-called *Münchener Brut* is an anonymous fragment of which only the beginning is preserved.<sup>3</sup> Another anonymous version is the *Chanson de Brut*, preserved in a thirteenth-century manuscript. This is in five fragments, and is "written as a chanson de geste, in monorhymed tirades of alexandrines. There are 3360 lines remaining."<sup>4</sup> In a fourteenth-century manuscript is a poem of 258 lines translated from Geoffrey. It begins with the story of Vortiger, and breaks off at the point where Merlin is preparing to explain the meaning of the fight of the dragons.<sup>5</sup> Still another version is found in the first part of the Anglo-French Chronicle of Pierre de Langtoft, which, however, had little or no influence on the development of the legend. Pierre slightly condenses Geoffrey's *Historia* and adds some minor particulars.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *PROPHETIA anglicana, sive vaticinia et praedicationes Merlini Ambrosii, ex incubo (ut hominum fama est) ante annos 1200 circiter in Anglia nati, a Galfredo Monumetensi latine conversa, una cum vii. libris explanationum in eandem prophetiam Alani de Insulis. Francofurti-ad-Mœnum, 1603. Small 8vo.*

<sup>2</sup> To avoid repetition I reserve further discussion for a later section.

<sup>3</sup> Edited by C. Hoffmann and K. Völmöller, Halle, 1877. Still another fragmentary version in rhyming octosyllabic verse exists in the form of *tirades* with assonances. Cf. Kreyssig, *Gesch. der franz. Lit.* i. 155.

<sup>4</sup> Ward, *Catal. of Romances*, i. 272.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* i. 384. See also Villemarqué, *Myrðhinn*, pp. 422-431; Kölbing, *Alt-englische Bibl.* iv. pp. cviii., cix.

<sup>6</sup> Langtoft lived during the reign of Edward I., and probably died in the reign of Edward II. Cf. T. Wright's ed. of L.'s Chronicle (Rolls Series), vol. i. p. xii. Lond. 1866.

2.—Robert de Borron's poem of *Merlin* belongs to the end of the twelfth century. Of this has been preserved only a fragment of 504 lines. The *Merlin* was intended as a continuation of the poem of *Joseph d'Arimathie*.

3.—At the end of the twelfth or the beginning of the thirteenth century, Robert de Borron's poem of *Merlin* was reduced to prose. This is the first branch of the romance of *Merlin*, and is the source of chapters i.–vi. in the English version.

4.—Several thirteenth and fourteenth century continuations of the short prose *Merlin* exist, but they have never been fully described.<sup>1</sup> Paulin Paris called the ordinary continuation the *Book of Arthur*.

5.—*Prophéties de Merlin*.<sup>2</sup> Translated from the Latin by "Mestre Richart d'Yrlande," at the command of the Emperor Frederick II. "These prophecies are quite unconnected with those in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia*; and such as are not purely romantic relate more to the affairs of Italy and of the Holy Land than to those of France or Germany, and hardly at all to those of England."<sup>3</sup>

6.—We have in a manuscript of the thirteenth or fourteenth century an Anglo-French "prophecy of Merlin about the six kings that are to follow King John, who are here called the Lamb of Winchester, the Dragon of Mercy, the Goat of Carnarvon, the Boar of Windsor, the Ass with Leaden Feet, and the Accursed Mole."<sup>4</sup>

7.—In 1455 Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia* was translated into French prose by Jehan Wauquelin of Mons.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> These versions I have discussed in treating of the manuscripts.

<sup>2</sup> In Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 25,434; end of thirteenth century. Imperfect at beginning and end.

<sup>3</sup> Ward, *Catal. of Romances*, i. 371–373.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* i. 299.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* i. 251–253.

8.—The first printed edition of the large prose *Merlin* appeared in 1498, and was followed by numerous others.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I give the editions in the order of their appearance:—

1498. The Romance and the Prophecies, printed for Anthoine Verart, Paris, The copy in the Bibliothèque Nationale is a small folio in black letter, containing three volumes bound in one, the first two containing the Romance, and the third the Prophecies. These last are, however, as Ward remarks, printed “in a strange state of disorder.” This is the rarest and choicest of the printed editions, and it has on the title-page a large illustration of the General Resurrection, and at irregular intervals woodcuts of a battle (seventeen times repeated), and of Christ asleep in the ship (on last page). The colophon at the end of vol. iii. gives the date: “Cy finissent les prophecies Merlin nouuellement imprime a paris lan mil. iiii. cccc. iiii. xx. xviii. pour Anthoine Verart demourant devāt nostre Dame De Paris a lymage saint Jehan leuangeliste/ ou au palays au premier pillier deuant la chappelle ou lenchâte la messe de messeigneurs de parlement.” The same publisher brought out another edition the same year. The forms of the letters prove that the second edition was reprinted from the type used in the first edition, but reset.

1505 (2nd September). The Romance and the Prophecies were printed for Michel le Noir at Paris, in three small quarto volumes, black letter.

1507. The same publisher brought out the same work in two quarto volumes, black letter.<sup>a</sup>

1526 (June). The Prophecies were printed at Paris for Philippe le Noir in a small quarto of two columns, black letter.

1526. In this same year the Romance and the Prophecies appeared in three octavo volumes, black letter.

A quarto edition in black letter of the Prophecies, without date, but assigned to the year 1526, was printed at Rouen for Jehan Mace of Rouen, Michel Angier of Caen, and Richard Mace of Rouen. Brunet mentions a quarto edition in black letter of the second volume of *Merlin* by the same publishers, who doubtless also printed the first volume, and assigns the two to 1526. Another quarto edition in black letter, also without date, appeared in three volumes, “Nouvellement imprimes a Paris, pour le veufe feu Jehan Trepperel et Jehan Jeannot.”

1528 (24th December). The Romance and the Prophecies were again printed for Philippe le Noir in three small quartos, black letter, two columns.<sup>b</sup>

1535. Another edition of *Merlin* was printed by Jehan Mace from a fifteenth-century manuscript. This was the last of the old editions.

1797. In this year appeared in Paris, in three volumes, 16mo., *Le Roman de Merlin l'enchanteur, remis en bon français, et dans un meilleur ordre*, par S. Boulard. Villemarqué gave a short analysis of the romance in his *Myrddinn ou l'enchanteur Merlin*,<sup>c</sup> and Paulin Paris a much longer and better one in the second volume of the *Romans de la Table Ronde*.<sup>d</sup>

\* Sommer (*Morte Darthur*, iii. 7, note) remarks that an edition appeared at Paris in 1510 (?) and another at Rouen in 1520 (?). As his dates are conjectural, I do not know whether he has in mind the editions I have cited under the year 1526.

<sup>b</sup> But cf. F. Michel, *Vita Merlini*, p. lxxviii., and Brunet, *Manuel du Libraire*, art. *Merlin*.

<sup>c</sup> Printed in Paris in 1861, and dated ahead so as to appear new in 1862.

<sup>d</sup> Paris, 1868.

Allusions to Merlin are not infrequent in French literature.<sup>1</sup> Thus Chrestien de Troyes in the *Roman d'Erec et Enide*<sup>2</sup> has :

“En mi la cort sor .i. tapit  
Ot .xxx. muis d'esterlins blans,  
Car lors avoient à cel tens  
Corréu dès le tens Merlin  
Par toute Bretagne esterlin.”

Merlin is also mentioned in Gautier's continuation of Chrestien's *Conte du Graal*,<sup>3</sup> as well as in the prose *Queste du Saint-Graal*.

Guillaume le Clerc, a thirteenth-century *trouvère*, in *Li Romans des Aventures Fergus* refers to

“Noquestan  
U Merlin's sejourna maint an.”<sup>4</sup>

In *Claris et Laris* Merlin is mentioned by name (l. 22,931), and elsewhere referred to as he, “Qui tout set, tout fet, et tout oit”; and he is called the “sages Mellins” in the *Roman de l'Escoufle*.<sup>5</sup> Merlin's exploit of bringing over the great stones to Salisbury Plain is touched upon in the *Roman du Hen*. The author of the *Conte du Perroquet* makes some use of the story of Merlin and alludes to the Prophecies, though he makes but slight reference to other Arthurian literature.<sup>6</sup> The enchanter plays a large part in *Les grandes et inestimables Croniques du*

Strangely enough there does not exist a single modern edition of this famous work. The first part, which extends to the coronation of Arthur, is included in the edition of the Huth MS. published (1886) for the *Société des Anciens Textes Français*; but the manuscript is a poor one, and the first part contains only about one-seventh of the entire romance. A proposal to print in *fac-simile* a 14th century vellum MS. (Brit. Mus. Add. 10,292) of the ordinary *Merlin* was made by Dr. H. Oskar Sommer in the *Academy* (1891), and in vol. iii. of his *Studies on the Sources of Malory's Morte Darthur* (London, 1891), but nothing has appeared as yet.

<sup>1</sup> For several of these allusions I am indebted to Michel's *Vita Merlini*, pp. lxxxiii.—lxxxv.

<sup>2</sup> B. N. MS. fr. 7498<sup>4</sup>, last leaf but one, col. 2, last verse.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Nutt's *Studies*, p. 18, p. 43.

<sup>4</sup> B. N. MS. fr. 7595, fol. 442b, col. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. G. Paris, *Hist. Litt. de la France*, xxx. p. 132; F. Michel, *Vita Merl.*, p. lxxxv.

<sup>6</sup> *Hist. Litt.* xxx. p. 104.

*grant et enorme geant Gargantua* (1532), in which both Merlin and Arthur are introduced, but no longer in a serious mood. The spirit of burlesque which gives such a flavour to *Don Quixote* had long before begun to find ridiculous the old romances with their interminable wonders.<sup>1</sup>

Since the close of the mediæval period Merlin has suffered neglect in France. Except for Jacques Vergier's (1657-1720) versified tale of *l'Anneau de Merlin*<sup>2</sup> and Edgar Quinet's strange prose poem of *Merlin l'Enchanteur*<sup>3</sup> (1860), there is little or nothing in modern French literature to remind us of the place that the great enchanter held in the literature and the thought of the Middle Ages. The group of Merlin legends recently put together by Méras is a mere collection of exercises for teaching boys French syntax!<sup>4</sup>

#### D.—Provençal.

From allusions to Merlin in the *Cabra juglar* of Giraud de Cabraraireira, as well as in the *Guordo* of Bertrand de Pâris de Roerge, Francisque Michel inferred the existence of the romance of *Merlin* in Provençal.<sup>5</sup> This opinion was justified by the publication in 1883 of the fragments of a Provençal translation of the romance of *Merlin*.<sup>6</sup> But, as Chabaneau remarks (p. 4): "Allusions to Merlin are very rare in Provençal poetry.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. e.g. Chaucer's *Rime of Sire Thopas*.

<sup>2</sup> See his poems, Paris, 1750, 2 vols., 12mo.

<sup>3</sup> Paris, 1860, 2 vols., 8vo.

<sup>4</sup> *Merlin l'Enchanteur, Légende. Exercices sur la Syntaxe pratique de la Langue française* par B. Méras. New York and Boston, 1888, 94 pp., 12mo.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *Vita Merlini*, Introd. pp. lxix.-lxxi.

<sup>6</sup> *Fragments d'une traduction provençale du roman de Merlin*, publiés par Camille Chabaneau, Paris, 1883. 8vo. Pièce. The MS. was found in the archives of the Commune of Epine—a "double leaf of parchment detached toward the end of the sixteenth century or later from a handsome thirteenth-century MS., which contained a translation of the French romance of *Merlin*." F. 1 contains the amour of Uter with Ygerne, from near the beginning of the incident to the point where Uter prepares to besiege the Duke of Tintagel; f. 2 tells the story from the death of Uter to the episode of the sword enclosed in the anvil. Cf. Chabaneau, pp. 3, 4. The fragments differ slightly from the version of B. N., MS. fr. 747.

Birch-Hirschfeld (*Ueber die den provenzalischen Troubadours bekannten epischen Stoffe*, p. 55) can find but three. I do not remember to have seen others."

#### E.—Italian.

The earliest Italian translation of the French romance of *Merlin* is the *Historia di Merlino*, made in 1379, and printed in a folio edition at Venice in 1480.<sup>1</sup> The Life and Prophecies were printed in a quarto volume at Florence in 1495. Two other quarto editions appeared at Venice, one in 1507 and the other in 1529; and two octavo editions, one in 1539 and one in 1554.<sup>2</sup> The popularity of Merlin is further shown by allusions in Dante's *Divina Commedia*, in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* (c. 3 and c. 26),<sup>3</sup> in Bojardo's *Orlando Innamorato* (l. 3), and in the works of writers of lesser fame.

#### F.—Spanish.

The romance of Merlin was early translated into Spanish, and printed at Burgos in 1498, under the title: *El baladro del sabio Merlin cō sus profecias*. Only the first nineteen chapters, which tell the story up to the coronation of Arthur, have the same subject-matter as the *Merlin* of Robert de Borron. After that point this version agrees in many particulars with the continuation found in the Huth MS.,<sup>4</sup> but affords among other rarities a translation of at least a part of the lost *Conte du brai*. In 1500 appeared a folio edition of *Merlin y demanda del Santo Grial*, printed at Seville. Merlin's celebrity in the Iberian peninsula is attested by allusions scattered

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted at Bologna, 1884, 8vo. Cf. criticism by Kölbing, *Altenglische Bibliothek*, iv. p. cxi. Cf. also, *ibid.* p. cxxix.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Michel, *Vita Merlini*, Introd. p. lxxviii.; Brunet, *Manuel du Libraire*, art. *Merlin*.

<sup>3</sup> In the third canto of O. F. the poet tells of the grotto that Badamante visits, where Merlin is buried, and where he predicts to his visitor the coming glories of the house of Este.

<sup>4</sup> Published by G. Paris and J. Ulrich for the *Soc. des. Anc. Textes Français*. See Introd. pp. lxxii.-xci.



through the older Spanish literature, some of which are found in the *Historia de la Reyna Sebilla*,<sup>1</sup> in *Don Quixote*, and the famous romance of *Don Belianus*.

#### G.—Portuguese.

The Portuguese *Merlin* contains, according to M. Gaston Paris, "the third part of the compilation of which the Huth MS. has preserved to us the first two."<sup>2</sup>

#### H.—Netherland.

In the year 1261, the poet Jacob van Maerlant translated the *Graal* and the prose *Merlin* under the title: *Historie van den Grale* and *Merlijns Boeck* (circa 10,400 ll.). He added among other things a trial of Satan. His work was continued by Lodewijc van Velthem (1326) in his *Boec van Coninc Artur*, which is a close translation of the *Livre du roi Artus* (25,800 ll.).<sup>3</sup>

#### I.—German.

Some of the romances of the Round Table, as, for instance, the Holy Grail, found an early welcome in Germany, but it was not till 1478 that Ulrich Fürterer, a poet of the court of Albrecht IV., duke of Bavaria, wrote a long verse romance "on the knights of the Round Table and the Holy Grail, in which he recounted also the history of Merlin."<sup>4</sup> Nothing else worthy of mention<sup>5</sup> appeared till 1804, when Friedrich von Schlegel translated from an early edition (1528) a considerable part of the French prose romance. Scarcely anything is omitted up to the point (p. 256) where Arthur goes to the assistance of Leodegan.

<sup>1</sup> Michel notes an allusion in this romance to an adventure of Merlin not found in the French prose *Merlin*. *Vita Merl.*, Introd. pp. lxxxviii.—xc.

<sup>2</sup> *Romania*, xvi. p. 585.

<sup>3</sup> Paul, *Grundriss d. germ. Philologie*, B. II. pp. 458, 459. Cf. also *Germania*, xix. p. 300; Kölbing, *Altenglische Bibl.* iv. p. cxi., p. cxxviii. The work of the two poets has been published by J. van Vloten under the title: *Jacob van Maerlant's Merlijn*, Leiden, 1880-1882.

<sup>4</sup> Michel, *Vita Merl.*, Introd. p. lxxii. For the poem itself see *Altdeutsche Gedichte*, ii. p. 263; *Der Theure Moerlin* (F. F. Hofstätter).

<sup>5</sup> The play entitled *Die Geburt des Merlin* is a translation of William Rowley's *Birth of Merlin*, London, 1662, 4to. See *Nachträge to Shakespeares Werken*, Bd. I. 1840, 8vo.

After this point Schlegel devotes his few remaining pages (which are very small) to the most important incidents in Merlin's later career, his relations with Nynianne (*sic*), and his tragic end. In 1829 Uhland wrote his short ballad of *Merlin der Wilde*.<sup>1</sup> Three years later Karl Immermann attempted to unite in his drama of *Merlin: a Myth*,<sup>2</sup> the leading motives of the Faust legend with those of the Holy Grail, but he failed to awaken popular interest in the great enchanter. This piece closes the Merlin literature in German.<sup>3</sup>

#### J.—Icelandic.

1.—*Merlinus-Spá*: or the prophecy of Merlin. This is "an early versified paraphrase [in two parts, of 290 and 459 verses respectively] of Geoffrey of Monmouth's well-known prophecy, the text of which is freely treated and amplified by one who knew some, at least, of the old Heroic Lays."<sup>4</sup> The author was a monk, *Gunnlaug Leifsson*.

2.—The *Breta-Sögur* is a translation of Geoffrey's *Historia* condensed and altered.<sup>5</sup>

#### K.—English.

I will here outline the history of the legend from its first introduction into English down to the present. The relations of the prose romance to the French original will best be treated in another section; but I shall here venture a somewhat more extended discussion of the English forms of the legend than I have given to those of the other literatures.

1.—The earliest mention of Merlin in an English book is in *Lazamon's Brut*<sup>6</sup> (ll. 12,884–19,961), written about the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Holland, *Ueber Uhland's Ballade "Merlin der Wilde."* Stuttgart, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Düsseldorf, 1832, 8vo.

<sup>3</sup> Yet the appearance in Vienna (about 1888) of a new opera on Merlin by Karl Goldmark shows that the legend has not lost its vigour. Cf. *The Opera Glass*.

<sup>4</sup> Vigfusson and Powell, *Corpus Poeticum Boreale*, ii. pp. 372–379.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Ward, *Catal. of Romances*, i. pp. 304–305; Kölbing, *Altenglische Bibliothek*, iv. p. cviii.

<sup>6</sup> Ed. by Sir F. Madden. London, 1847. 3 vols. 8vo.

year 1205. The *Brut* is in large measure a translation of Wace's *Roman de Brut*; but although Laȝamon expanded his work to more than double the size of the original, he added scarcely anything<sup>1</sup> to the story of Merlin.

2.—Robert of Gloucester's *Chronicle* appeared at the end of the thirteenth century, about a century after Laȝamon's *Brut*, but Robert's book, in so far as it touches the history of Merlin (ll. 2271–3480), is a translation of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia*.<sup>2</sup>

3.—Robert of Brunne's *Chronicle* (1338) follows Wace in the legendary portion<sup>3</sup> of the story; but Robert's variations from his French original are trifling.

4.—The chronicles above mentioned are dull enough, and can lay but slight claim to be called literature. The earliest really literary use of Merlin in English is in the long verse romance entitled *Arthour and Merlin*, which was translated from a French original as early as the first quarter of the fourteenth century, and possibly even earlier.<sup>4</sup> This is among the most important of the romances of Merlin, as well for its intrinsic merit as for its relations to the great prose romance. Judged by a reasonably severe standard, many passages are tiresome enough. The author is still too dependent upon his source;

<sup>1</sup> Cf., however, Kölbing, *Altenglische Bibl.* iv. p. cxii, note. In l. 23,845 is an allusion to Merlin not found in Wace. The passage from l. 23,305 to l. 23,354 occupies in Wace only six lines.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. K. Brossmann, *Ueber die Quellen der me. Chronik des Robert von Gloucester*, Breslau, 1887; Kölbing, *Altenglische Bibliothek*, iv. p. cviii. The *Chronicle* was edited for the Rolls Series by W. A. Wright, London, 1887, 2 vols., 8vo.

<sup>3</sup> ll. 6989–9768 relate to Merlin. The portion of the *Chronicle* based on Wace was edited by Dr. F. J. Furnivall, for the Rolls Series, under the title, *Robert of Brunne's Story of England*, Lond., 1887, 2 vols., 8vo. Cf. A. W. Zatsche, *Ueber den ersten Theil der Bearbeitung des Roman de Brut des Wace durch Robert Mannyng of Brunne*, Reudnitz-Leipzig, 1887.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Kölbing, *Altenglische Bibliothek*, iv. p. lx. The author is not certainly known; but Kölbing thinks him identical with the author of *Kyng Alisaunder* and *Richard Coer de Lion* (p. lx. sqq.), though he is not quite certain about the second piece (p. ciii.).

but in more than one feature the *Arthour and Merlin* marks a distinct advance over the narrative literature that preceded it. The poem is about as long as the first nine books of *Paradise Lost*, but is nevertheless a fragment, which breaks off after the victory gained by Leodegan, Cleodalis, Arthur, Ban, and Bohort, over King Rion and the giants.<sup>1</sup> The last lines are:—

“pai maden gret blis and fest,  
And after jeden hem to rest.”<sup>2</sup>

The story so closely resembles the prose romance that Ellis's analysis of the poem might almost be taken for an analysis of the prose romance. There are, however, striking differences, some of which I will note. The poem begins by telling of Constans and Vortigern,<sup>3</sup> and the tower which the latter constructed.<sup>4</sup> The poem describes in 628 lines what is related in the prose romance in about six pages. The story of the rich man's daughter who is deceived by the devil<sup>5</sup> is brought in later (l. 799 *sqq.*). In dramatic effect the poem is in this instance much inferior to the prose romance. As some of the minor differences, we note that in the poem<sup>6</sup> Merlin is five years old when brought before Vortigern; in our romance, seven years old. In the poem the boy Merlin, while being conducted to the king, laughs<sup>7</sup> three times, apparently without cause.

<sup>1</sup> As printed for the Abbotsford Club in 1838 from the Auchinleck MS. in the Advocates' Library in Edinburgh, the poem consists of 9772 lines in short rhyming couplets. Of this poem Ellis gives a long analysis (pp. 77-142, Bohn's ed., of *Specimens of Early English Metrical Romances*). He follows the Lincoln's Inn MS. No. 150. The poem has been re-edited by Kölbing in vol. iv. of the *Altenglische Bibliothek*, Leipzig, 1890. Kölbing's edition contains 9938 lines, and differs in the numbering of the lines from the earlier edition. My references are to Kölbing's edition. Kölbing discusses in detail (pp. cvii.-cl.) the relations of the poem to the English prose version and others. Most of my comparison was made before Kölbing's edition appeared.

<sup>2</sup> The poem parallels more or less exactly the prose romance as far as p. 358, l. 28. This would indicate a possible loss of eight or nine thousand lines.

<sup>3</sup> The poem calls him *Fortiger*.

<sup>4</sup> The poem thus begins with what is related in Chapter II. of the prose romance, p. 23.

<sup>5</sup> The devils' council begins at l. 640.

<sup>6</sup> ll. 1375-1381.

<sup>7</sup> l. 1342.

The occasion of the third outburst is, however, that the king's chamberlain is a woman in the disguise of a man, with whom the queen has fallen in love.<sup>1</sup> In the prose version Merlin laughs but twice. According to the poem,<sup>2</sup> the Magi when brought before the king and confronted by Merlin plead that they have been deceived by the signs in the sky. Merlin says that his father the devil had evidently planned thus to destroy his son. Of this turn of the incident the prose romance (p. 39) knows nothing. Among the important omissions of the poem is that of the bringing over of the great stones from Ireland,<sup>3</sup> as well as all account of Merlin's visits to Nimiane.<sup>4</sup> The Holy Grail is scarcely referred to, though not altogether forgotten.<sup>5</sup>

Among the additions to the poem we should not overlook the charming verses on the seasons, and the pretty little by-play between Arthur and his young bride as he goes forth to battle :

pat ich day paramour,  
 Guenore armed king Arthour ;  
 At ich armour, þe gest seit þisse,  
 Arthour þe maiden gan kisse,  
 Merlin bad Arthour, þe kyng,  
 þenche on pat ich kisseing,  
 When he com in to bataile ;  
 "þis," he seyde, "Merlin, saunfaile." <sup>6</sup>—ll. 8677-8684.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the story of Grisandol in the prose romance, pp. 422-437.

<sup>2</sup> l. 1573 *sqq.*

<sup>3</sup> Cf. ll. 2150-2180.

<sup>4</sup> She is named once (l. 4446) along with Morgein, who

"Woned wiþ outen Niniamé,  
 þat wiþ hir quaint gin  
 Bigiled þe gode clerk Merlin."

With this compare the prose version p. 185.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. ll. 8902-8918.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. prose version, p. 323, where Merlin laughs because they have not kissed each other. Then Arthur takes the maiden in his arms and kisses her sweetly, as he should.

What has been adduced is sufficient to prove either that the English prose romance is based upon an original differing considerably from the original of the verse romance, or that the English translator of the prose romance purposely varied and expanded his original. The English prose romance is, however, elsewhere shown to be an almost slavish translation of the French prose version. There is enough general agreement to show that the basis of the poem and of the prose romance is in essential features the same, and enough difference to prove that the two versions cannot be based on exactly the same original. I imagine the poem to be based upon one of the numerous French prose continuations of the original prose romance of Merlin. The author refers to his source as the "boke,"<sup>1</sup> and once to the *Brout*,<sup>2</sup> which must be the *Brut*, but of course only a small portion of this poem can be referred to Wace. It is barely possible that the original was in French verse, but of this I feel by no means certain.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> l. 2581; l. 4434; l. 4719; l. 5785, etc.

<sup>2</sup> line 2730.

<sup>3</sup> The essential likeness of the two English versions, along with striking differences, appears plainly in a comparison of the list of knights:—

THE POEM, ll. 3067-3106.			THE PROSE MERLIN, p. 108.		
		Number of knights.			Number of knights.
1. Lot . . . . .		500	1. Loth . . . . .		500
2. Nanters of Garlot . . . . .		700	2. Vrien of Gorre . . . . .		400
3. Vrien of Gorre . . . . .		25,000	3. Ventres of Garlot . . . . .		700
4. Carodas of Strangore . . . . .		600	4. Carodas Brenbras of Strangore . . . . .		600
5. Yder . . . . .		30 × 20 = 600	5. Aguyssas . . . . .		500
6. Angvisant . . . . .		500	6. Ydiers . . . . .		400

In the first great tournament the best knights, according to the poem (ll. 3591-3601), are: Lucan the boteler, Kay, Grimfles, Maruc, Gumas, Placides, Driens, Holias, Graciens, Marlians, Flaundrius, Sir Meliard, Drukus, Breoberuis. The prose version (p. 135) mentions the following: Gifflet, Lucas the boteller, Marke de la roche, Guynas le Bleys, Drias de la foreste sauge, Belyas, Blyos de la casse, Madyens le crespes, Flaundryns le blanke, Grassien, Placidas le gays.

5.—A later version of a portion of this romance is contained in four manuscripts, which differ considerably.<sup>1</sup> The romance begins with the story of King Constance and “Fortager,” tells of the birth of Merlin and his wonderful deeds till the death and burial of Uter Pendragon. According to Ward:<sup>2</sup>

The rebel kings who fight against Arthur, with the number of the accompanying knights, are:—

POEM, ll. 3725-3773.		PROSE, pp. 145-146.	
	Number of knights.		Number of knights.
1. Clarion of Norþ-Humberland	7000	1. Duke Escam of Cambenyk	5000
2. Brangores of Strangore .	5000	2. Tramelens of North Wales	6000
3. Cradelman of Norþ-Wales	6000	3. Clarion . . . . .	3000
4. King of the Hundred Knights	4000	4. King with the hundred knights	3000
5. Lot of Leonis and Dorkaine	7000	5. Loth of Orcanye and Leonoy	7000
6. Carodas of the Round Table	7000	6. Carados of Strangore .	7000
7. Nanters of Garlot . . .	6000	7. Ventres of Garlot . . .	7000
8. Vrien . . . . .	6000	8. Vrien of Gorre . . . .	7000
9. Yder . . . . .	5000	9. Ydiers of Cornewaile .	6000
10. Angvisaut of Scotland .	6000	10. . . . .	.
11. Sestas, Erl of Canbernic .	5000	11. . . . .	.

Still more remarkable is the agreement in the lists of the princes and knights who came to the help of Leodegan. Poem, ll. 5410-5498: 1. Ban; 2. Bohort; 3. Arthour; 4. Antour; 5. Vlfin; 6. Bretel; 7. Kay; 8. Lucan þe boteler; 9. Grifles; 10. Marec; 12. Drians of þe Forest sauage; 13. Belias þe lord of Maiden castel; 14. Flaundrin; 15. Lamuas; 16. Amores þe broun; 17. Ancales; 18. Bliobel; 19. Bleoberis; 20. Canode; 21. Aladanc þe criske; 22. Islacides; 23. Lampades; 24. Ierias; 25. Cristofer of þe roche norþ; 26. Aigilin; 27. Calogrenaud; 28. Angusale; 29. Agraue; 30. Cleades þe fondling; 31. Gimires of Lambale; 32. Kehedin; 33. Merangis; 34. Goruain; 35. Craddoc; 36. Claries; 37. Blehartis; 38. Amandanorgulous; 39. Osoman; 40. Galescounde; 41. Bleheris; 42. Merlin; 43. Leodegan. Cf. the list in the prose romance, p. 212.

<sup>1</sup> The MSS. are:—<sup>a</sup> Lincoln's Inn Library, MS. 150, containing 1980 lines. <sup>b</sup> Bishop Percy's Folio MS., Brit. Mus. Add. 27879, containing nine parts and 2378 lines. <sup>c</sup> Brit. Mus. Harl. MS. No. 6223, containing 62 lines. <sup>d</sup> Oxford, Douce MS. No. 236, containing 1278 lines. Kölbing remarks (*Altengl. Bibl.* iv. p. xvii.) that Douce MS., No. 124, is a very careless copy of the version of the Auchinleck MS. Kölbing prints L and D with the variants of P and H (*Altengl. Bibl.* iv. 275-370). P is printed in *Bishop Percy's Folio Manuscript*, edited by Hales and Furnivall, Lond. 1867, vol. i. pp. 422-496. For the relation of the later version to the other versions see Kölbing, iv. pp. cliii.-clxxii.; Hales and Furnivall, i. pp. 419-421. Other details are given by Kölbing, iv. pp. xvii.-xviii.; Ward, *Catal. of Romances*, i. 385, 386; and in *Arthour and Merlin* (edited by Turnbull for the Abbotsford Club, Edin. 1838), pp. x.-xiii.

<sup>2</sup> *Catal. of Romances*, i. 386.

"The events relating to Merlin are fuller than those given by Geoffrey of Monmouth and Wace, and they agree with those given by Robert de Borron, in the prose romance of Merlin. The present version is probably translated from a French poem."

It is hardly necessary to remark that the birth of Merlin with which Robert de Borron's romance begins, is in this verse romance brought in after a long account of "Fortager" and the sons of Constance, and that minor differences are numerous.

6.—From the middle of the fourteenth century Merlin seems to have been in favour in England. Laurence Minot (1352) begins one of his political songs entitled,

"How Edward at Hogges vnto land wan,  
And rade thurgh France or euer he blan."

with the words—

"Men may rede in Romance right  
Of a grete clerk þat Merlin hight;  
Ful many bokes er of him wreten,  
Als þir clerkes wele may witten;  
And þit in many priué nokes  
May men find of Merlin bokes.  
Merlin said þus with his mowth,  
Out of þe north into þe sowth  
Suld cum a bare ouer þe se,  
þat suld mak many man to fle," etc.

A few years later (1355–1362) Thomas Grey in his old French *Scalachronica* mentions Thomas of Erceldoune, and ranks him along with William Banastre and Merlyne.<sup>1</sup> In *Sir Gawayne and the Green Knight* (about 1360) there is a mere allusion to Merlin (l. 2448).

<sup>1</sup> The various points of contact of the legend and the prophecies of Merlin with Thomas of Erceldoune, are pointed out by Alois Brandl in vol. ii. of the *Sammlung engl. Denkmäler in kritischen Ausgaben*, Berlin, 1880, 8vo. For example, Merlin's love for Nimiane is paralleled by Thomas's love for a nymph.



In the famous *Process of the Sevyng Sages* the eleventh tale bears the title *Herowdes and Merlin*.<sup>1</sup> Then in the metrical romance of Sir Gowghter<sup>2</sup> we read near the beginning—

“Sum tyme the fende hadde postee  
For to dele with ladies free  
In liknesse of here fere,  
So that he bigat Merlyng and mo,  
And wrought ladies so mikel wo,  
That ferly it is to here.”—ll. 7–10.

A little farther on are these very singular lines—

“þis chyld within hur was no nodur,  
But eyvon Marlyon halfe brodur,<sup>3</sup>  
For won fynd gatte hom bothe.”—ll. 97–99.

On this romance A. Brandl remarks—

“Gegenüber der französischen Quelle, deren Kern durch einen reich verzweigten Stammbaum auf das indische Märchenbuch Sendabad zurückgeht, hat der englische Bearbeiter manches vereinfacht und seinen Landsleuten näher gebracht, namentlich aber den Zauberer Vergil in den nationalen Merlin verwandelt.”<sup>4</sup>

Towards the end of the fourteenth century (1387) the Latin *Polychronicon* of Ranulf Higden, written early in the reign of Edward III., was translated into English by John of Trevisa. The *Polychronicon*, as its name implies, is a compilation bringing

<sup>1</sup> See the second M.E. version, ed. T. Wright, Lond., 1845, l. 2323. Cf. Kölbing, *Altenglische Bibl.* iv. p. civ.

<sup>2</sup> It would be interesting to compare the legend of *Merlin* with that of *Robert the Devil*. Cf. K. Breul's *Sir Gowther*, Oppeln, 1886, which contains an investigation of the legend of *Robert the Devil*.

<sup>3</sup> Brit. Mus. MS. Reg. 17, B. xliii, f. 118, reads:

“The childe with-yn hire was non other,  
But Marlynges half brother:  
On fende gat hem bothe.”

<sup>4</sup> Paul's *Grundriss der germ. Philologie*, ii. 635.

together in mediæval fashion a vast amount of historical material, but it contains nothing new about Merlin.<sup>1</sup>

7.—No important literary use was made of Merlin during the remainder of the fourteenth and till about the middle of the fifteenth century, when some unknown scholar translated (c. 1450–1460) the great prose romance of *Merlin* from the French prose redaction of Robert de Borron's poem and the ordinary continuation known as the *Book of Arthur*. This is the romance which is the central point of our investigation.

8.—About the same time (1450 ?) Henry Lonelich, skinner, made a rhyming version of the French prose *Merlin* from a manuscript closely allied to that from which the prose version is translated. The metrical romance contains, according to Kölbing,<sup>2</sup> about 28,000 lines, and forms a part of MS. 80 of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. The beginning is at f. 88b, col. 1, and is as follows :—

“Now gyneth the Devel to wraththen him sore,  
As Aftir scholen þe herkene & here wel More,  
whanne that Ours Lord to helle wente  
and took Owt Adam with good Entente  
and Also Eve and Ek Others Mo,  
þat with him he likede for to han tho.  
and whanne þe develis behelden this,  
Moche drede and Merveille they hadden, I-wis.  
So as Aftyward longe beffelle,  
to-gederis they Conseilled, the develis, ful snelle  
and token hem to-Gederis In parlement,  
the Maister Develis be On Assent,  
and seiden : “what Mester Man Is he, this,  
that doth vs here Al this distres ?

<sup>1</sup> The doggrel rhyming Latin verses, which carefully distinguish Merlin Ambrose from Merlin Silvester, are based on Giraldus Cambrensis.

<sup>2</sup> *Altenglische Bibliothek*, iv. p. xix. Kölbing prints (pp. 373–478) the first 1638 lines, which parallel the prose *Merlin* pp. 1–23, and gives in his introduction a minute account of the poem.

we Mown not Aȝens him Maken defens,  
whanne he is Owht In Owre presens  
and bynemeth vs that we scholde haue,  
and for hym non thing mowen we kepen save."

I have examined the first 6200 lines of the poem,<sup>1</sup> and find a remarkably close general agreement between it and the prose romance. All the incidents are the same, and the difference in details is very slight. This agreement suggests three questions: First, is Lonelich's *Merlin* a mere versification of the English prose version? or, secondly, is the prose version based on Lonelich's romance? or, thirdly, are both versions based on exactly the same French original?

We have first to note that the verse romance is considerably more prolix<sup>2</sup> than the prose; but the prolixity is largely due to unskilful padding of the verse. Of course, we do not expect exact verbal agreement between a verse and a prose romance, even though translated from the same French original, and we cannot draw satisfactory conclusions from minor variations in phrases, or even from the omission of sentences. The exigencies of metre lead a halting versifier into many strange paths. But if the two translators had been really one, or if one had borrowed from the other, or if the French manuscript had been the same in both cases, we should have considerable verbal agreement in phrases and sentences, as well as in numerals and proper names.

A considerable number of passages show almost exact verbal agreement, but this seems to be due to the similarity of the source rather than to actual borrowing by one English version from the other, for the diction as a whole is so distinct in the

<sup>1</sup> These were furnished me by Dr. Furnivall in a MS. copy. This copy ends at l. 43 of f. 111.

<sup>2</sup> By a rough calculation I estimate the first 6200 lines to contain not far from 43,000 words: the prose version does not much exceed 35,000 words.

TABLE I.

ENGLISH PROSE.	LOWELICH.	HUTH MERLIN.
x monthes; ij yere age or more;	ten monthes; two yeres old; xviij	nuef mois; un an; en l'eage de dis et
xij monthes (p. 15).	monthes (ll. 999-1101, f. 92 <sup>b</sup> ).	uit mois (p. 20).
xl dayes (p. 16).	xl dawes (l. 1105, f. 92 <sup>b</sup> ).	quarante jours (p. 22).
viiij dayes (p. 16).	viiij dayes (l. 1116, f. 93).	set jours (p. 22).
to the v <sup>e</sup> day (p. 18).	xv dayes (f. 93 <sup>b</sup> ).	a le quinsainne (p. 25).
iiij men (p. 21).	tweyne men (f. 94 <sup>b</sup> ).	deus hommes (p. 29).
xij (p. 25).	xij (f. 95 <sup>b</sup> ).	douze (p. 35).
two noble men; tow gode	two good men; tweyne goode Men	deus preudommes (p. 35).
men (p. 25).	(f. 95 <sup>b</sup> ).	li preudomme (p. 36).
xij (p. 26).	xij (f. 96).	douze (p. 37).
iiij fadome of height (p. 27).	the heythe of fowre Roddis (f. 96).	trois toises u quatre (p. 38).
vij in nombre (p. 28).	sevene there were (f. 96 <sup>b</sup> ).	set (p. 39).
viiij dayes of respyte (p. 28).	viiij dayes of Respyt (f. 96 <sup>b</sup> ).	encore jour dusqu'a onze jors (p. 40).
xij (p. 29).	xij (f. 96 <sup>b</sup> ).	douze (p. 43).
xij; xij; xij (p. 31).	xij; xij; xij (f. 97).	douze (p. 45; here written but once,
		but pronouns supply the lack).
xj (p. 47).	xj (f. 102).	onsime (p. 72).

a Cstedes, a Cpalfrayes, and a hundred faucons (p. 50).	An hundred destreres & as Many of palfray and An hundred fawkowns (f. 103).	Et nous le terrons de lui et treu l'en donrons chacun an dis chevaliers, et dis damoiseles et dis faucons et dis levriers et cent palefrois (p. 79).
withinne these vj dayes (p. 53).	witþ Innē size dayes (f. 103 <sup>b</sup> ).	en sis jours (p. 84).
on the vje day (p. 53).	to the xvj day (f. 103 <sup>b</sup> ).	au sisime jour (p. 85).
The xj day of Iuynē (p. 54).	Atte the Elleveneth day (f. 104).	L'onsime jour de jung[net] (p. 87).
two dayes (p. 54).	tweyne dayes (f. 104).	deus jours (p. 87).
the thirde day (p. 54).	On the thryddē (f. 104).	au tierch jour (p. 87).
xl winter (p. 59).	two and fowrtý þer (f. 105).	(No equivalent for "xl winter").
fifty knyghtes (p. 60).	fyfty knyghtes (f. 105 <sup>b</sup> ).	cinquante des plus preudomes (p. 96).
viiij days (p. 61).	viiij dayes (f. 105 <sup>b</sup> ).	uit jours (p. 97).
thre yere (p. 61).	two yere (f. 105 <sup>b</sup> ).	plus de deus ans (p. 98). <sup>1</sup>
the xje iour of Pentecoste (p. 67).	xi day aftryr pentecost (f. 107 <sup>a</sup> ).	un jour après (p. 102).
xl dayes (p. 70).	fowrtý dayes (f. 107 <sup>b</sup> ).	quarante jours (p. 105).
vj monethes (p. 80).	Sixe Mownthes (f. 110).	sis mois (p. 115).

<sup>1</sup> The Huth *Merlin*, p. 98, l. 26 *sqq.* has no equivalent for the passage in the English prose version, from p. 61, l. 31 to p. 63, l. 29; and the subsequent lines in the French do not exactly agree with the English.

two versions that this in itself is a strong argument against a common authorship.

## ENGLISH PROSE.

- "That shaH I telle the," quod merlin" (p. 32).  
 "He ycleped hym maister, for that he was maister to his moder" (p. 33).  
 "to god I comaunde yow" (p. 33).  
 "and axed a-noon how they hadde spedde" (p. 35).  
 "And, sir, the peple that were ther-at cleped this vesseH that thei hadden in so grete grace, the Graal" (p. 59).

## LONELICH.

- "That schal I the telle," quod Merlyne" (f. 97b).  
 "and Maister he clepid him for this manere, For Maister to his Modir he was Every where" (f. 97b).  
 "I comande þow to God" (f. 97b).  
 "And Axede of hem how they hadden sped" (f. 98b).  
 "Sire, this peple Clepede this vessel  
 The Sank Ryall *oper* ellys Seint Graal" (f. 105).

The agreement in the numerals is very close, but there are some trifling variations which indicate that the two translators based their work upon slightly different manuscripts. I give a list of some of the numerals, and add for comparison the same as found in the Huth *Merlin*. In contrast with the French, the two English versions show striking agreement. See Table I. p. 54.

More striking differences are found in the names; and these seem unmistakably to indicate that the two versions are independent, and based upon slightly different French manuscripts. I pass over most of the differences in spelling; for while the forms in the two versions follow pretty regularly unlike types, there are too many variations in the English prose text itself to make an argument satisfactory that is based on mere orthography.

## ENGLISH PROSE.

- Loth (p. 23).  
 Constance (p. 24).

## LONELICH.

- Omitted (f. 95).  
 Costantyn (f. 95).

## ENGLISH PROSE.

The three sons of Constance are :

- (1) Moyne, (2) Pendragon, (3)  
Vter (p. 24).

Vortiger (p. 24), *et passim*.

Gawle (p. 25).

Benoyc, that now is cleped Bourges  
(p. 25).

Constance (p. 41).

Aungys (p. 50).

Ventres (p. 179).

Gawein       ,,

Gaheret       ,,

Gaheries       ,,

Cardoell in Walys (p. 180).

## LONELICH.

The three sons of Costantyn are :

- (1) Costantyn, (2) Awrely Ambros or Pendragon, (3) Vter  
(f. 95).

Fortager (f. 95), *et passim*.

Wales (f. 95*b*).

Boorges (f. 95*b*).

Constantyn (f. 100*b*).

Hangwis (f. 103).

Newtris (f. 135).

Gawenet       ,,

Garrers       ,,

Gaheryes       ,,

Kerdyf In Wales (f. 135).

More important still are such differences as appear in the following passages :—

(1) At l. 49 of Lonelich's version we read : "And hem also anoynteth with oynement." The English prose has no reference to ointment.

(2) At l. 241, l. 256, and l. 1064 of the poem we read that the erring maiden was to be stoned. The prose version (p. 5, p. 16) knows nothing of the stoning.

(3) In the poem (ll. 1286–1292), the judge says—

"ȝif thou konne proven that thou seist pleyn,  
Thy modyr from brenneng schalt thou save,  
And al thyn owne axeng thou schalt have ;  
But, natheles, and it be, as thou dost telle,  
Thanne schal I don brenne bothe ful snelle,  
Bothe myn owne modyr and ek thyn,  
And bryngen hem bothe to a schort fyn."

The prose version (p. 18, ll. 24–27) has—

"Tho gan the Iuge to be right wrath, and seyde : 'Yef thou canste do so, then haste reserwed thy moder fro brennyng; but wyt thou weh, yef thou canste not prewe this vpon hir, I shaʒl brenne bothe the and thy moder to-gedere.'"

(4) In Lonelich's version (ll. 1465-1467) we read—

“For sweche spirites as they be  
Ben icleped Equibedes, I telle the,  
And from the eyr into the erthe they gon.”

The Huth *Merlin* (i. p. 28) has—

“Je sui fieus d'un anemi qui engingna ma mere. Et saces que ceste maniere d'anemis ont a non Ekupedes, et repairent en l'air.”

Yet in the English prose *Merlin* (p. 20) the proper name is omitted—

“I am the sone of the enmy that begiled my moder with engyn, and their repair is in the air.”

(5) Lonelich writes (ll. 1667-1676)—

“and hos that wil knowen In Certaygne  
what kynges that weren In grete Bretaygne  
Sethen that Cristendom thedyr was Browht,  
They scholen hem fynde hos so that it sowht,  
In the Story of Brwttes book;  
there scholen þe it fynde and þe welen look.  
which that Martyn de Bewre traunslated here  
From latyn Into Romaunce In his Manere.  
but leve we now of Brwttes book,  
and after this storye now lete vs look.  
In Bretaygne somtyme A kyng there was  
That Costantyn was clepid, In that plas.”

The English prose (pp. 23, 24) has—

“And he that wil knowe the lyf of kynges whiche were in the grete Bretayne be-fore that cristendom come, be-holde the story of Bretons. That is a boke that maister Martyn traunslated oute of latyn, but heire rested this matere. And turneth to the story of Loth, a crysten kyng in Bretayne, whos name was Constance.”

This passage is exceedingly important in that Lonelich's version mentions Martyn de Bewre.<sup>1</sup> This translator is

<sup>1</sup> B. N. MSS. fr. 105; 9123 “Martins de bieure.” The others, in so far as they name *Martins* at all, are: B. N. MS. fr. 749, “martins de roescestre”; Bib. del'Arsenal, MS. 3482, “martins de rocestre”; B. N. MS. fr. 344, “Maistre martins de ronain.”



mentioned in but two of the French MSS., and these two, while representing very closely the version followed by the translator of the English prose, are not in every detail coincident with it.

The differences between the English prose version and the metrical version by Lonelich compel us to answer in the negative the three questions with which we started, and admit no other conclusion than that the two translators worked independently upon different French manuscripts having almost, but not perfectly, identical readings.<sup>1</sup>

9.—Of all the older Arthurian literature none exceeds in interest to the English reader the *Morte Darthur* of Sir Thomas Malory (1469). This was first printed by Caxton in 1485, and speedily became one of the most popular books in England. When we compare the *Romance of Merlin* with the *Morte Darthur*, we find that for a little distance the two stories run in almost parallel channels, though there is less agreement than one might expect, and this, though scattered throughout the *Merlin*, is confined almost wholly to the first five books of the *Morte Darthur*.<sup>2</sup> The points of contact may be briefly pointed out in detail. The story opens in the *Morte Darthur* with the amour of Uter Pendragon and Igrayne. In nine pages and a half Malory arrives at Arthur's coronation and the feast which he held at Pentecost.<sup>3</sup> Many of the

<sup>1</sup> Kölbing's view (*Altenglische Bibl.* iv. p. clxxxix.) is slightly different. He concludes that Lonelich's poem and the English prose version, "von einander, ganz unabhängig, auf denselben frz. text, die prosa-auflösung von Robert de Boron's epos, als quelle zurückgehen." Kölbing would perhaps hardly care to have the words "Robert de Boron's epos" understood to mean that Robert's poem is the source of the romance after the coronation of Arthur.

<sup>2</sup> There are twenty-one books in all. My references are to H. Oskar Sommer's edition, Lond. 1889, Vol. I. *Text*. For a minute account of the relations of the *Morte Darthur* to the *Merlin* see Sommer's third volume, *Studies on the Sources*, pp. 14-58.

<sup>3</sup> In the *Merlin* (p. 108) the feast was held after the middle of August. Cf. *Morte Darthur*, i. pp. 35-44.

incidents are substantially the same as in the *Merlin*, but much abridged. Merlin's origin is passed over without remark, and he is introduced in the first chapter as a personage well known: "Wel my lord said Syre Vlfius/ I shall seke Merlyn/ and he shalle do yow remedy that youre herte shalbe pleafyd." Up to the end of B. I. chap. xvi. there is considerable general agreement in the incidents of the two versions, though the *Morte Darthur* gives a very brief account of what is told in the *Merlin* with many words and manifold variations. Chapter xvii. has some incidents found in the *Merlin*, but much altered. From this point up to chap. xxvii. is only here and there an incident that reminds one of the *Merlin*. In chap. xxvii. (p. 74) is the message of King Ryons, who sends for Arthur's beard. In *Merlin* this occurs not far from the end (p. 619) of the story. The war with the Romans as related by Malory in the fifth book of the *Morte Darthur* agrees only in confused outlines with the version in *Merlin*. According to Malory the war occurs after Merlin is enclosed in the rock. In our version Merlin is at Arthur's side assisting him with wise counsels. In the *Morte Darthur*, in the same chapter and on the same page (B. IV. ch. i. p. 119) in which the tragic end of Merlin is described,<sup>1</sup> Lancelot is spoken of as a child at the court of King Ban his father. But at the beginning of the war with the Romans the child has become a famous knight, and plays a part like that of Gawain in the *Merlin*.<sup>2</sup> In the prose *Merlin*, however, Lancelot is not yet born.<sup>3</sup> In the fight with the giant on Mount St. Michel, Malory (B. V. ch. v.) adds the picturesque detail that there "were thre fayr

<sup>1</sup> The account in the *Merlin* (p. 681) differs considerably from that in the *Morte Darthur*.

<sup>2</sup> As Sommer points out in the *Academy* of Jan. 4, 1890, Malory does not follow the ordinary *Merlin* in his account of the war with the Romans, but rather the same source as *La Morte Arthure*, edited by Brock for the E.E. Text Soc.

<sup>3</sup> P. 698. Cf. *Morte Darthur*, B. II. ch. xix. p. 99; B. IV. ch. i. p. 119, l. 19; B. IV. ch. xix. p. 143, l. 26.

damoyseles tornynge thre broches whereon were broched twelue yonge children late borne like yonge byrdes." Of this our version knows nothing. In minor details and in phraseology the two versions differ continually, even when the agreement is closest, and after a certain point the two narratives are entirely different. The *Morte Darthur* hurries at once to the later career of Arthur and his knights. The *Merlin* relates with endless detail the incidents of Arthur's early life, and introduces us to a large number of the characters who figure in the *Morte Darthur*. This masterpiece of poetic prose, which Sir Walter Scott pronounced the best romance in our language, far exceeds in literary merit the confused and prolix *Merlin*; but this, as affording in effect an introduction to the *Morte Darthur*, must always retain a real interest. Even considered by itself, the *Merlin* has in more than one passage a nameless charm and beauty in comparison with which the *Morte Darthur* is distinctly inferior, though the heights occasionally reached in the *Merlin* make us see only more plainly the barren wastes through which much of the narrative creeps.

10.—In addition to the long prose and verse romances we have a considerable number of prophecies attributed to Merlin in English verse of the fifteenth century. One of these contains 278 lines, and is a translation from French prose of Merlin's *Prophecy of the Six Kings that are to follow King John*.<sup>1</sup> Another prophecy<sup>2</sup> of three hundred lines relates to the year "m.cccc.l. and moo." Three Scottish prophecies in alliterative verse, attributed to Merlin, are found "in a collection of prophecies partly composed, partly adapted from earlier compositions, at various periods between 1513 (the date of Flodden Field) and 1550, together with some later additions."<sup>3</sup> Some

<sup>1</sup> Ward, *Catal. of Romances*, i. p. 309.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* i. p. 325.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* i. pp. 334-336.

of the prophecies in the collection are assigned to Thomas of Erceldoune<sup>1</sup> and others.

11.—At the end of Caxton's *Chronicle* is a little poem on Merlin printed by Wynkyn de Worde in 1498, of which I cite the more interesting portions. This poem is a translation of a Latin poem in Higden's *Polychronicon*.

At Neuyn in Northwales  
A lytell ylonde there is  
That is called Bardysay.  
Monkes dwelle there alway,  
Men lyue so long in that hurst  
That the oldest deyeth fyrst.  
Men say that Merlyn there buried is,<sup>2</sup>  
That hyght also Syluestris  
There were Merlyns tweyne,  
And prophecyed beyne,  
One hyte Ambrose and Merlyn  
And was ygoten by gobelyn  
In Demecia at Carmerthyn,  
Vnder kyng Vortygeryn ;  
He tolde his prophecy  
Euen in Snowdonye  
Atte heede of the water of Coneway  
In the syde of mount Eryry,  
Dynas Embreys in Walsse  
Ambrose hylle in Englysshe.  
Kyng Vortygere sate on  
The watersyde and was full of wone,  
Then Ambrose Merlyn prophecyed  
Tofore hym ryght tho.

<sup>1</sup> On the relation between Merlin's prophecies and those of Thomas of Erceldoune see J. A. H. Murray's ed. of Thomas of Erceldoune for the E.E. Text Soc. 1875 ; Ward's remarks in the *Catal. of Romances*, i. pp. 328-338 ; Brandl in Zupitza's *Sammlung engl. Denkmäler in kritischen Ausgaben*, ii. pp. 12-41.

<sup>2</sup> According to another tradition Merlin is buried at Drummelzier in Scotland. See J. S. Stuart Glennie's *Arthurian Localities*, p. lxxii.

What wytte wolde wene  
 That a fende myght get a childe?  
 Some men wolde mene  
 That he may no such werke welde.  
 That fende that goth a nyght  
 Wymmen full ofte to gyle,  
 Incubus is named by ryght;  
 And gyleth men other whyle,  
 Succubus is that wyght.  
 God graunt vs non such vyle.  
 Who that cometh in hyr gyle  
 Wonder happe shall he smyle,  
 With wonder dede  
 Bothe men and wymen sede,  
 Fendes woll kepe,  
 With craft and brynge an hepe;  
 So fendes wylde  
 May make wymmen bere childe.  
 Yet neuer in mynde  
 Was childe of fendes kynde,  
 For withouten eye  
 Ther myght no suche childe deye,  
 Clergie maketh mynde,  
 Deth sleeth no fendes kynde;  
 But deth slewe Merlyn,  
 Merlyn was ergo no goblyn.

12.—In the sixteenth century interest in Merlin is evidenced by the publication in 1510 by Wynkyn de Worde of *A Lytel Tretys of the Byrth and Prophecyes of Merlin*. The celebrated printer issued another edition in 1529, and John Hawkyngs a third in 1533.

13.—The numerous chronicles written in the sixteenth century detail with more or less fulness the exploits of the enchanter, but they tell nothing new. We find, however, in the sixteenth-century literature, in so far as it turned for

inspiration to the romances or to the legendary history of Britain, that Merlin was one of the convenient "properties" of the poets.<sup>1</sup> We meet him in Warner's *Albion's England* (1586), which is full of early British legends. In a splendid passage of the *Faery Queene*<sup>2</sup> Spenser tells of the wall of brass<sup>3</sup> with which Merlin began to surround the city of Caermarthen just before he was lured to his grave in the rock by the wiles of the fair temptress.

14.—In 1603 appeared for the first time in print<sup>4</sup> some old alliterative Scottish prophecies attributed to Merlin, along with prophecies by Thomas the Rhymer and others. In these prophecies we read (i. ll. 114–120)—

"When the Cragges of Tarbat is tumbled in the sey,  
At the next sommer after sorrow for euer:  
Beides bookes haue I seene, and Banisters also,  
Meruelous Merling and all accordes in one:  
Meruelous Merling is wasted away,  
With a wicked woman, woe might shee be;  
For shee hath closed him in a Craige on Cornwel cost."

<sup>1</sup> In Robert Chester's *Love's Martyr* (Lond. 1601; reprinted by the Rev. A. B. Grosart for the New Shakspere Soc. Lond. 1878), the "true legend of famous King Arthur" is introduced. Merlin naturally appears, but he is made responsible for nothing except the birth of Arthur.

<sup>2</sup> B. III. canto 3, stanza 6 *sqq.* The argument of the third canto is:

"Merlin bewrays to Britomart  
The state of Arthegall,  
And shows the famous progeny  
Which from them springen shall."

Other references to Merlin occur, F. Q. I. canto 9, st. 4, 5, where Merlin is represented as visiting "Old Timon" who had taken Arthur at his birth to bring up. Other references occur B. II. c. 8, st. 20; B. III. c. 2, st. 18, 21.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Giraldus Cambrensis, *Itin. Cambr.* i. 6; Holinshed's *Chron.* i. 129; Camden's *Brit.* p. 734.

<sup>4</sup> This collection has been several times reprinted, 1615, 1680, 1833. The last edition bears the title—"Collection of Ancient Scottish Prophecies, in alliterative verse, reprinted from Waldegrave's edition, M.DC.III. Edinburgh; printed by Ballantyne and Co., M.DCCC.XXXIII. 4to." Sir Walter Scott made considerable use of these prophecies. Cf. also section 10, *ante*, and Ward, *Catal. of Romances*, i. pp. 334–336.

A little later (ll. 170-172) we find—

“ As Bertlingtones bookes, and Banister us telles,  
Merling and many more, that with maruels melles,  
And also Thomas Rymour in his tales telles.”

In the second of these prophecies (ll. 63-65) we read—

“ Oft this booke haue I seene, and better thereafter,  
Of Meruelous Merling, but it is wasted away,  
With a wicked woman, woe might it be.”

In 1612, Michael Drayton brought out the first eighteen books of his *Polyolbion*—a poetical description of England—and related the various legends connected with the places described. Thus he sings of “Stonenge,” of the wall of brass that the magician would fain have built about Caermarthen, of his imprisonment in a cavern, and of the spirits that “a fearful horrid din still in the earth do keep.”<sup>1</sup>

In Song the Fifth (vol. ii. pp. 757, 758), he tells of Merlin's birth, but speaks sceptically of the incubuses.<sup>2</sup> In Song the Tenth (vol. iii. pp. 842, 843) he devotes twenty-four lines to Merlin and his prophecies.<sup>3</sup>

Ben Jonson, though he had scornfully referred in *The New Inn* (act i. sc. 1) to the Arthurian stories, raises Merlin from his tomb, and lets him take part in the *Speeches at Prince Henry's Barriers*.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Song the Fourth, vol. ii. p. 735, Lond. 1753. This is a passage of twenty lines.

<sup>2</sup> Selden gives in a learned note (p. 763) the grounds of objection to their existence. We may remark that Selden (vol. ii. p. 746) follows Giraldus Cambrensis in distinguishing Merlin Ambrose from Merlin Silvester.

<sup>3</sup> In Drayton's *Remarks to the Reader*, May 9, 1612, he says: “In all, I believe him most, which, freest from affection and hate (causes of corruption), might best know, and hath with most likely assertion delivered his report. Yet so, that, to explain the author, carrying himself in this part an historical, as in the other a chorographical Poet. I inerr oft, out of the British story, what I importune you not to credit. Of that kind are those prophecies out of Merlin sometimes interwoven; I discharge myself; nor impute you to me any serious respect of them.”—*Works*, ii. p. 649.

<sup>4</sup> *Works*, pp. 577-580, Dyce's ed. *The Old Dramatists*.

All through the seventeenth century Merlin enjoyed a certain popularity, which showed itself in a variety of ways. In 1641 appeared in London his *Life*, written by Thomas Heywood, the most prolific dramatist of the time, under the following title: "*The Life of Merlin, surnamed Ambrosius, his Prophecies and Predictions interpreted; and their Truth made good by our English Annals.*"<sup>1</sup>

Twenty-one years later William Rowley wrote a tragedy-comedy entitled *The Birth of Merlin; or, The Child hath found his Father*,<sup>2</sup> in the composition of which the publishers declared that Shakspeare had assisted; but of this there is no proof.<sup>3</sup>

It is well known that Dryden, as well as Milton, intended to write an Arthurian epic, but never carried out the plan. Yet Dryden went so far as to write a dramatic opera<sup>4</sup> entitled *King Arthur, or The British Worthy*, in which Merlin figures as one of the characters. The author drew freely on his invention, and reproduced very little of the Arthur or Merlin of the romances. As Sir Walter Scott well observes: "He [Arthur] is not in this drama the formidable possessor of Excalibur, and the superior of the chivalry of the Round Table; nor is Merlin the fiend-born necromancer of whom antiquity related and believed so many wonders. They are the prince and magician of a beautiful fairy tale, the story of which, abstracted from the poetry, might have been written by Madame D'Auniois."<sup>5</sup>

The epic was reserved for Sir Richard Blackmore, who

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted, Caermarthen, 1812. 8vo. London, 1813.

<sup>2</sup> London, 1662. 4to. Reprinted in *The Doubtful Plays*, Tauchnitz, Leipzig, 1869. The second half of the title of Rowley's play has sometimes as a variant, *The Child has lost his Father*.

<sup>3</sup> Ward, *Eng. Dram. Lit.* i. pp. 468, 469, gives an analysis of the play, and rejects Shakspeare's participation; cf. also, Halliwell-Phillipps' *Outlines of the Life of Shak.*, p. 193.

<sup>4</sup> Acted and published in 1691.

<sup>5</sup> Dryden's *Works*, Scott's ed. viii. p. 110; cf. also Ward, *Eng. Dram. Lit.* ii. p. 523.



touched the last refinement of dulness in his *Prince Arthur*, published in ten books in 1695. Merlin figures scarcely at all in the poem (B. vii. p. 202 *sqq.*), and then in a character absurdly out of keeping with all traditions. The worthy doctor depicts a British sorcerer who had been driven out of the British State and had sided with the Saxons. The magician essayed to help the Saxon Octa, but suddenly,

“A Warmth Divine his Spirits did invade,  
And once a Sorcerer a Prophet made.  
The Heav’nly Fury *Merlin* did constrain  
To Bless, whom he to Curse design’d in vain.”—p. 205.

Twice he thus plays the part of Balaam, then flees before the angry Octa (p. 207), and is seen no more.

In 1736 appeared two attempts to dramatize a portion of the story of Merlin. The first was a mere alteration by Giffard<sup>1</sup> of Dryden’s *King Arthur*, and bore the title *Merlin or the British Inchanter, and King Arthur the British Worthy; A Dramatic Opera*. The second piece is a versified drama preserved in a fragment without a title-page (pp. 33–40) and entitled *The Royal Chace, or Merlin’s Hermitage and Cave*.<sup>2</sup> In the same group of revivals of Merlin, is to be counted the pantomime opera, *Merlin in Love*, which the poet and dramatist Aaron Hill (1685–1749–50) ventured to write.<sup>3</sup> This production, of very slender merit, practically closes the list of the older literary works in which Merlin figures. Yet one might

<sup>1</sup> Of Giffard we know little. William Cushing remarks (*Anonyms*, p. 423, Cambridge, U.S.A., 1890) that he was “an actor, and long the manager of the old theatre in Goodman’s Fields; under his management Mr. Garrick made his first appearance in London.” Here the piece was first acted; and it was published in 8vo., London, 1736.

<sup>2</sup> The copy I refer to is in the British Museum. The date and place of publication are to some extent conjectural, but it is reasonably certain that the play appeared in London in 1736.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. i. of his *Dramatic Works*. London, 2 vols., 8vo.

probably glean from the poets and prose-writers a considerable number of allusions not here noted.<sup>1</sup>

Besides these serious attempts to make literary use of the great enchanter, there appeared in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries a considerable number of general prophecies and almanac predictions which were fathered upon the national prophet. Merlin's name had long ceased to be a name to conjure with, but nothing was more natural than to take advantage of his celebrity in order to help the sale of catchpenny pamphlets of a prophetic character. A good type of the prophet of that day was William Lilly (1602-1682), the most celebrated of the English astrologers of the seventeenth century.<sup>2</sup> He won notoriety at the time of the Puritan uprising against Charles I., and under the name of *Merlinus Anglicus* published among many other predictions *England's Propheticall Merline foretelling to all nations of Europe*.

Lilly's prophecies were forerunners of a long series of predictions, the titles of which I will enumerate without discussion. It will be noted toward the close of the list that the prophetic character is well-nigh lost :—

- 1.—A Prophetie [of Merlin] concerning Hull in Yorkshire, 1642. 4to.
- 2.—The Lord Merlin's Prophecy<sup>3</sup> concerning the King of Scots ; foretelling the strange and wonderfull Things that shall befall him in England. As also The time and manner of a dismal and fatall Battel. Lond., Aug. 22, 1651. 4to.
- 3.—Merlin Reviv'd, or an old Prophecy found in a Manuscript in Pontefract Castle in Yorkshire. (In verse.) Lond. 1681. Another ed. 1682. Fol.

<sup>1</sup> For example, Pope has four allusions to Merlin :—

“ Did ever Proteus, Merlin, any witch.”—Sat. III. 152.

“ Extols old Bards, or Merlin's Prophecy.”—Sat. V. 132.

“ When Merlin's Cave is half unfurnish'd yet.”—Sat. V. 355.

“ Lord, how we strut thro' Merlin's Cave, to see.”—Sat. VI. 139.

<sup>2</sup> His *Introduction to Astrology* even appeared in a new edition : Lond. 1832, 8vo.

<sup>3</sup> This was an old prophecy presented to Queen Elizabeth in 1582.

- 4.—The mystery of Ambros Merlins; Standard-bearer, Wolf, and last Boar of Cornwall, with sundry other misterious prophecys . . . . . unfolded in the following treatise on the signification . . . . . of that prodigious comet seen . . . . . anno 1680, with the blazing star, 1682 . . . . . Written by a lover of his countrys peace. Lond. (1683), fol.
- 5.—Catastrophe Mundi; or Merlin reviv'd, in a Discourse of Prophecies and Predictions, and their remarkable accomplishment; with Mr. Lilly's Hieroglyphics exactly cut. By a Learned Pers[on]. Lond. 1683, 12mo.
- 6.—Merlin reviv'd, in a Discourse of Prophecies and Predictions, and their Remarkable accomplishment, with Mr. Lilly's Hieroglyphics; also a collection of all the Ancient Prophecies, touching the Grand Revolution like to happen in these Latter Ages. Lond. 1683, 12mo.
- 7.—Merlini Anglici Ephemeris; or, Astrological Judgments for the Year 1685 . . . . . London, Printed by J. Macock for the Company of Stationers, 1685, 8vo.
- 8.—In the year 1709 Swift threw out "A Famous Prediction of Merlin, the British Wizard. Written above a thousand years ago, and relating to the year 1709. With explanatory notes by T. Philomath." With regard to this prophecy Swift observes, after a passing jibe at the almanac-maker, Partridge: "I found it in an old edition of Merlin's prophecies, imprinted at London by Johan Haukyns, in the year 1530, p. 39. I set it down word for word in the old orthography, and shall take leave to subjoin a few explanatory notes."<sup>1</sup>
- 9.—Merlinus liberatus. An Almanack for the Year of our blessed Saviour's Incarnation 1723 . . . . . by John Partridge.<sup>2</sup> London, Printed by J. Roberts for the Company of Stationers, 12mo.
- 10.—Merlinus liberatus . . . . . London: Printed by R. Reily, for the Company of Stationers, 1753: 1761. 12mo.

<sup>1</sup> Swift's *Works*, vol. viii. pp. 480-484, Scott's ed.

<sup>2</sup> This is the Partridge just referred to, who was the laughing-stock of the wits associated with Swift. Cf. Scott's *Prose Works*, vol. v. p. 199.

- 11.—Merlin's Life and Prophecies . . . . . His predictions relating to the late contest about . . . Richmond Park. With some other events relating thereto, not yet come to pass, etc. London, 1755, 8vo.
- 12.—A Prophecy of Ill. ["A political satire."] London, 1762, 8vo.
- 13.—A prophecy of Merlin. An heroic poem concerning the wonderful success of a project, now on foot, to make the River from the Severn to Strond navigable. Translated from the original Latin, annexed with notes explanatory. London, 1776, 4to.
- 14.—Merlinus Liberatus. An Almanack. By John Partridge [pseud.], London, 1819–1864, 16mo.
- 15.—The Philosophical Merlin: being the translation of a valuable manuscript, formerly in the possession of Napoleon Buonaparte . . . . . enabling the reader to cast the Nativity of himself . . . . without the aid of Tables . . . . . or Calculations. Part I. [The second part never appeared.] London, 1822, 8vo.
- 16.—Urania; or the Astrologer's Chronicle and Mystical Magazine. Edited by Merlinus Anglicus, jun. [R. C. Smith.] London, 1825.<sup>1</sup>

In the miscellaneous pamphlets just cited the fame of the great prophet had sunk to its nadir; but with the rise of Romanticism Merlin again found a place of honour. Early in the present century Sir Walter Scott introduced him as a leading character into one of the most graceful of his romantic poems, *The Bridal of Triermain* (1813).

The great enchanter Merlin had long been resting in his grave

<sup>1</sup> In addition to these pamphlets, all of which bear a more or less prophetic stamp, there are several other fugitive productions, which I cannot describe more precisely, but which may be classed with the English Ephemerides. Such are: *Merlin's Almanack and Prognostications*, *Merlin's Prognostications*, *The Mad-merry Merlin*, *The Royal Merlin*, etc.

Even in our own day Merlin's name has not infrequently served as a pseudonym.<sup>a</sup> Under this name Alfred Tennyson contributed two poems to the *Examiner* (Lond. 1852) with the titles: *The Third of February*, 1852, and *Hands All Round*. Of less note are Merlin = Milner; Merlin the Second = David Henry. Merlin was the pseudonym of Dr. Alex. Wilder, from 1864 to 1870 the New York correspondent of the Boston *Daily Advertiser*.

<sup>a</sup> Cf. Cushing's *Initials and Pseudonyms*, Art. *Merlin*.

in the rock, when Gyneth, the fair daughter of Gwendolen and Arthur, was offered in marriage to the knight who should prove himself bravest in the tournament. From all sides the knights of the Round Table gathered for the contest. As the combat thickened, the proud maiden saw without pity one knight fall after another, till at length young Vanoc, of the race of Merlin, died at her very feet. Then suddenly arose out of the earth, in the midst of the lists, the form of Merlin, who with stern gesture pronounced sentence upon her—

“Thou shalt bear thy penance lone  
In the valley of Saint John,  
And this weird shall overtake thee;  
Sleep, until a knight shall wake thee,  
For feats of arms as far renown'd  
As warrior of the Table Round.”

—CANTO II. STANZA xxvi.

For five hundred years the maiden slept her enchanted sleep within a mighty castle, till at length she was awakened by the Baron of Triermain, Sir Roland de Vaux, who braved the dangers of the Hall of Fear, and defied the snares

“Spread by Pleasure, Wealth, and Pride.”

—CANTO III. STANZA xxxvi.

When he entered the magic bower where the maiden slept in her ivory chair, she awoke suddenly from her slumber, while the magic halls melted away amid the flash of lightning and the roll of thunder. But safe in the arms of the bold knight lay the princess, and with him she went to be his bride.

The two leading motives of the piece—the summoning of an enchanter, and the magic sleep of a princess who is to be awakened by a brave knight—are familiar and threadbare enough; but Scott, while missing some of the naïve simplicity of the verse romance of the Middle Ages, has invested the

narrative with a grace and beauty not often found in his models.<sup>1</sup>

Very different from Scott's somewhat conventional enchanter is the Merlin of Tennyson's tale of *Vivien* (1859), in which the poet tells how Merlin was beguiled by the wily temptress who had vainly endeavoured to seduce "the blameless king." The story is too familiar to need recalling; but we may note that in this poem Tennyson differs widely from the sources that he usually follows so closely. Nowhere in the old romances does the character of Vivien appear in such a malignant light. In the prose romance of *Merlin* (p. 681) she desired to have him ever with her, and for this she wrought upon him the enchantment that he had himself taught her; and while it seemed to him that he was in the fairest and strongest tower in the world there were few hours of the day or of the night when she was not with him. But though the maiden went in and out when she would, Merlin never came forth from the fortress in which he was imprisoned.

According to Malory's *Morte Darthur* (B. IV. ch. 1), Nyneue, the lady of the lake, imprisoned Merlin in a rock wrought by enchantment. He had been tempting her to give him her love, but "she was euer passynge very of hym, and fayne wold haue ben delyuerd of hym."

<sup>1</sup> Scott alludes to Merlin and the Lady of the Lake in *Kenilworth*, chap. xxx., and makes use of Merlin in his ballad on *Thomas the Rhymer*, Part III.

The novelist Thomas Love Peacock introduces Myrddin Gwyllt (*sic*: the name should, of course, be Myrddin Wylt, or Merlin the Wild) into his romance of *The Misfortunes of Elphin* (1829). Merlin here takes part in a song-contest with the other Welsh bards, and sings the *Avalleuau* or *Song of the Apple-trees*. (Reprinted, Lond. 1891.)

In a ballad of unknown age, a "Fragment of Child Rowland and Bard Ellen," the eldest brother of the lost maid Ellen goes to the Warluck Merlyn (*Myrddin Wyldt, sic*) and asks his advice. Merlin gives the desired instructions. Child Rowland proceeds to the Castle of Elfland, rescues his sister from the king, and brings back her and the two brothers in search of whom she had gone. The portion of the ballad relating to Merlin is lost, but has been supplied from an oral narration. *Cf. Eng. and Scottish Ballads*, ed. by F. J. Child, i. 416-423. Boston, 1857.

Tennyson has borrowed little more than the hint of his leading motives. Yet this poem, steeped as it is in the personality of the poet, gives us a picture of the last days of Merlin which, in its depth and colour, may be sought elsewhere in vain. The mysterious charm of the old Celtic legend has here lost none of its glamour; and while the venomous insinuations of the wily harlot well-nigh destroy the beauty of some passages, yet the strange spell that one feels in *The Lady of Shalott* and *The Passing of Arthur*, recurs now and again in this legend of the enchanted sleep of Merlin.

Merlin has inspired nothing of recent years to compare with *Vivien*, but the enchanter figures once more in Tennyson's *Merlin and the Gleam* (1889) and in a poem by Robert Buchanan — *Merlin and the White Death*.<sup>1</sup>

We are perhaps hardly bound to notice the appearance of Merlin in Mark Twain's burlesque romance, *A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur*, though it is to be feared that the irreverent mind of this unheroic century will find as much entertainment in the farcical burlesque as in the serious romance of six centuries ago.

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## V.

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EARLY FORMS OF THE LEGEND.

WE have traced in outline the Merlin legend in the various forms which it has assumed in the literature of Europe. We must now go back a little, and endeavour to follow in some detail the development of the legend from the earlier forms. But before we can study the legend itself we are compelled to consider briefly the genuineness and authenticity of the literary documents in which it is contained. For the sake

<sup>1</sup> In *Once a Week*, 10: 251.

of convenience we will glance first at the Latin sources, and then pass to the Welsh literature. The first name to consider is Nennius.

It is not easy to overestimate the importance for the history of the Arthurian romances, and especially for the history of Merlin, of this obscure little chronicle. One can find in the extant Celtic literature little or nothing that throws light on the sources of the romantic Merlin legend. But in this short recital we have in embryo<sup>1</sup> one of the most characteristic and interesting portions of the legend afterwards developed in the French romance. It is in fact, as de la Borderie remarks, "the first and the most ancient collection of the popular legends of Britain, which later gave birth to the romances of *Brut*, of *Merlin*, of *Arthur*—in a word, the immense cycle of the chivalric epics of the Round Table."<sup>2</sup> We may then agree with Milton that Nennius is "a very trivial author," without losing sight of the immense importance of the *Historia Britonum* in the development of the legendary history of Britain. It will therefore be worth our while to pause for a moment and review the varying opinions that have been advanced with regard to the authorship and the age of the book.

As to the authorship, we need scarcely remark that Nennius is a mere name used, as de la Borderie suggests, to cover our ignorance of the real author. For a time Gildas was credited with the book, but this hypothesis is now universally abandoned. Among other conjectures we may note that Paulin Paris<sup>3</sup> supposed the *Historia Britonum* to be the work of an Armorican which was brought into England early in the twelfth century. But critics are now generally agreed that this little chronicle

<sup>1</sup> Cf. de la Borderie, *L'Hist. Brit. attribuée à Nennius*, p. 69. "Ici [cap. 40] commence le récit d'une merveilleuse aventure, germe de tout ce qu'on a écrit plus tard sur le fameux Merlin et ses fameuses prophéties."

<sup>2</sup> *L'Hist. Brit.* etc. p. 83.

<sup>3</sup> *Les Romans de la Table Ronde*, I. p. 36.



is "essentially an insular creation."<sup>1</sup> Mr. Skene supposes that the *Historia* was "originally written in British in Cumbria or *y Gogledd*[*d*] (the North), and was afterwards translated into Latin."<sup>2</sup> It is of course made up of several parts of varying age. If we exclude the interpolations we have, according to de la Borderie,<sup>3</sup> the original core of the work, which may be analyzed as follows:—

1. Descriptio Britanniae.
2. Origo Britonum Scotorumque.
3. Britannia sub Romanis.
4. Historia Guortigerni.
5. Arthuri gesta.

For our immediate purpose we are concerned chiefly with the "*Historia Guortigerni*."

The age of the Chronicle has given rise to a great variety of opinions. In the preface to his text of Nennius, Mr. J. Stevenson (Eng. Hist. Soc. 1838) remarks (p. v.): "We may despair of being able to decide, with any degree of accuracy, either as to the age, the historical value, or the authorship of this composition." In Skene's opinion "The text of the *Historia Britonum* was first put together . . . as early as the seventh century."<sup>4</sup> His opinion is followed in Glennie's *Essay on Arthurian Localities*<sup>5</sup> (pp. xxxvii. and cvii.). Nash,

<sup>1</sup> De la Borderie, *L'Hist. Brit. attribuée à Nennius*, p. vii. We ought not, however, entirely to overlook Wright's remark (*On the Lit. Hist. of Geoff. of Monmouth*, Lond. 1848, 4to.) that the earlier manuscripts of Nennius appear to have been written abroad, and in fact never to have been in England, but to have been brought from France.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Encyc. Brit.* 9th ed. 1876, art. *Celtic Lit.* "*Y Gogledd*," notes M. Phillimore, "was technically used for all Britondom north of Wales in the Middle Ages and before."

<sup>3</sup> *Hist. Brit. attribuée à Nennius*, p. 27. For a general estimate of the value of Nennius, see Skene's *Celtic Scotland*, i. p. 152. Both Mr. Skene and Dr. Guest accept the historical authority of Nennius. I much regret not to have seen Mr. Phillimore's articles and notes in *Y Cymmrodor*, vols. ix. and xi., on various points connected with Nennius and Merlin.

<sup>4</sup> *Four Ancient Books of Wales*, i. pp. 58-60.

<sup>5</sup> Printed for E.E. Text Soc. in Part III. of the *Merlin*. Lond. 1869.

in his introduction to the *Romance of Merlin*, thinks that the *Historia* was "probably written as early as the eighth century."<sup>1</sup> By far the larger proportion of later critics have fixed upon the ninth century. Schoell, writing in 1851, made a strong argument<sup>2</sup> in favour of the year 822 A.D. He is followed by de la Borderie<sup>3</sup> and by Ebert.<sup>4</sup> The interpolated Prologue<sup>5</sup> of the *Historia* (sec. 2) assigns the date of the compilation to the year 858 A.D., but this is not accepted by the critics. Gaston Paris criticizes de la Borderie's argument, and rejects the date 822 for 878.<sup>6</sup> In the *Histoire Littéraire de la France* (xxx. p. 4), G. Paris merely remarks that the *Historia* was composed in the ninth century. Paulin Paris had already taken the same ground,<sup>7</sup> though confessing that the earliest manuscripts were of the twelfth century. Still more cautious than these critics are those who merely say that the pseudo-Nennius was put together between the seventh and the ninth centuries.<sup>8</sup> Ten Brink<sup>9</sup> speaks of the age of the

<sup>1</sup> Part I. p. ii. E.E. Text Soc. Lond. 1865.

<sup>2</sup> C. G. Schoell, *De Ecclesiasticæ Britonum Scotorumque historiae fontibus*, p. 35. Berlin, 1851.

<sup>3</sup> *L'Hist. Brit.* etc. Paris, 1883, p. 20.

<sup>4</sup> *Allgem. Gesch. der Litt. des Mittelalters im Abendlande*. Leipzig, 1887, Bd. iii. p. 387.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. De la Borderie, p. 12.

<sup>6</sup> *Romania*, xii. 368-70. "A primo anno quo Saxones venerunt in Britanniam usque ad annum quartum Mervini regis supputantur anni ccccxxix." Now, 449+429=878. "Il écrivait donc en 878." M. Paris selects for his purpose a Mervin who died in 903, and began (perhaps) to reign about 874. His fourth year would be, then, 878.

<sup>7</sup> *Les Romans de la Table Ronde*, i. 38. <sup>8</sup> *Encyc. Brit.*, art. *Romance*, xx. 638.

<sup>9</sup> *Gesch. der engl. Lit.* i. 169. Berlin, 1877. Mr. Phillimore, who is recognized as the best authority on Nennius, sends me the following note on the date of Nennius: "One of the two oldest MSS. of Nennius (Harl. 3859, now said by Mr. E. M. Thompson to be of the early 12th century), which contains the short Welsh chronicle and Anglo-Saxon Genealogies (briefly known as the *Saxon Genealogies* or *Genealogiae*), has annexed to it, in the same or contemporary hands, Welsh annals and genealogies (only found in this MS.) which must, from the way they end, have been written between 954 and 988, as I have shewn in *Y Cymmrodor*, vol. ix., in my preface to these *Annales Cambriae* and Old Welsh Genealogies from Harl. MS. 3859." Now this MS. and its three sister MSS. (de la Borderie, who adds other MSS. containing these *Genealogiae Regum Saxonum*, is altogether wrong: the MSS.

*Historia* as highly doubtful, and possibly not much earlier than Geoffrey of Monmouth, but in this opinion he has little or no following.

We see, however, that in spite of considerable differences of opinion, the critics are agreed in placing Nennius earlier than Geoffrey of Monmouth, and, with few exceptions, in the ninth century. As already remarked, the question as to the historical value of Nennius is for our purpose of no great importance; but we must take the *Historia Britonum* as the original source of one of the most characteristic of the legends relating to Merlin,<sup>1</sup> and as the only original we can find for much of Geoffrey's *Historia*.

De la Borderie does, indeed, attempt to make out a case for the so-called *Historia Britannica*, which he would like to regard as the intermediate link between Nennius and Geoffrey; but he has succeeded in convincing few besides himself. The fragments of this very dubious history date, according to him, from the year 1019 A.D.<sup>2</sup> "Like the *Historia Britonum* of Nennius,

in question either do not contain them or are not MSS. of Nennius) are very similar, except for the unique additions to one of them, and must, as can be proved, all go back immediately to one prototype. This prototype, ergo, must be older than 954. But this edition of the *Saxon Genealogies* is necessarily more modern as an edition (though it may be preserved in other MSS.) than the edition of Nennius without the said *Genealogies*, but with other accretions to the original work. Now this older edition is the one of which MSS. are most numerous. Moreover, the "*Sax.-Gen.*" edition, besides its accretion of the *Sax.-Gen.*, has the orthography of the Welsh names modernized from the older edition. But the older edition has already accretions (the *Mirabilia*) and changes, which mark it off as more modern than the edition of the Vatican MS. (the oldest known), which is said to be of the tenth century. We may, therefore, judge how far beyond 954 Nennius can be certainly predicated to be. But take 954 as the earliest possible date for the composition of Nennius (which it is not, by far), and, as Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia* was issued 1120-1130, or thereabouts, there is a difference of 170 or 180 years."

<sup>1</sup> I do not, of course, deny that some of the elements of the legend may be older than Nennius. See the notes on the Sources.

<sup>2</sup> *L'Historia Britannica avant Geoffroi de Monmouth*, p. 103. A few pages later he urges the following reasons: "Entre l'*Historia Britonum* de Nennius et l'*Historia Regum* de Geoffroi, il a nécessairement existé une forme intermédiaire de la légende des origines bretonnes. Cette forme constituait un livre appelé *Historia Britannica*,

the *Historia Britannica*," he remarks, "is the work of the imagination of the insular and not of the Armorican Britons."<sup>1</sup> Now then, argues de la Borderie, "the book of Nennius, the *Historia Britannica*, the work of Geoffrey, represent the three successive stages of the legend in its development from the British sources. Nennius, or the *Historia Britonum*, is the egg; the *Historia Britannica* is the chicken; the *Historia Regum Britanniae* is the superb and noisy (bruyant) cock, who chants his fanfare to the great orchestra."<sup>2</sup> He goes on to suggest<sup>3</sup> that the *Historia Britannica* is the identical book that was brought from Britain by Walter, archdeacon of Oxford,<sup>4</sup> for the use of Geoffrey of Monmouth. Britain, we are told, means the British (Welsh) portion of the Island of Great Britain, as opposed to the English portion.

It must be confessed that this is a large theory on a very narrow basis. We have but four small pages of the *Historia Britannica*. One paragraph is given to Arthur: of Merlin, we find no mention. How so careful a critic as de la Borderie could have propounded a theory so lacking in proof is not easy to see. As Gaston Paris points out,<sup>5</sup> if this Anglo-Latin book existed and was known in Armorica, English historians of that day might fairly be expected to know of

dont l'existence est constatée et testée en 1019 par le prêtre Guillaume, auteur de la *Vie de saint Gouëznou*. Mais—comme l'œuvre de Nennius, forme rudimentaire de la légende, comme le livre de Geoffroi qui en marque l'épanouissement,—cette forme intermédiaire appartient exclusivement, par son inspiration et sa rédaction aux Bretons de l'île, et il n'est nullement prouvé—au contraire—que l'exemplaire qu'en posséda Gautier d'Oxford sortit de l'Armorique," etc.—*Ibid.* p. 108.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.* p. 99.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 102.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 102–107.

<sup>4</sup> "Ce Gautier, surnommé *Calenius*, est un personnage assez mystérieux. Henri de Huntingdon (*De Contemptu Mundi*, § 4, éd. Arnold, p. 302), l'appelle 'superlative rethoricus.' On lui attribue une continuation de l'*Hist. regum* de Gaufré pendant quarante ans, qui ne s'est pas retrouvée. Il figure en 1129 avec son ami *Gaufridus Artur* (ce surnom ne fut donc pas donné à Gaufré pour son *Historia*) dans les chartes de fondation de l'abbaye d'Oseney près d'Oxford (v. Dugdale, *Monasticon* vi. 251)." —G. Paris, *Romania*, xii. 373. This note is based on one by Sir F. Madden. See further, Ward's *Catalogue of Romances*, i. pp. 218, 219.

<sup>5</sup> *Romania*, xii. 371, 372.

its existence. Yet William of Malmesbury, writing in 1125, "declared positively that he could find for the ancient history of the island no other sources than Beda and Gildas: indeed, except the pseudo-Nennius used by William himself and by Henry of Huntingdon, no other source was known up to the appearance of Geoffrey's book (1136); and when this appeared, the accounts that it contained of the victories of Arthur in Gaul were to everybody a revelation, which Henry of Huntingdon and others accepted with as much confidence as surprise, (but) which William of Newburgh and others rejected with contempt. Furthermore, Geoffrey, proud of the possession of the Breton book which his friend Walter had brought him, declares that the English historians, not having the documents that he possesses, can say nothing concerning the British kings of which his history alone knows." With no great injustice, therefore, M. Paris ends his criticism by calling the *Historia Britannica* "ce fantôme de ce livre imaginaire." We may, then, pass directly to Geoffrey of Monmouth.

It is quite unnecessary to go into detail in treating of the life of Geoffrey of Monmouth.<sup>1</sup> For our purpose it is enough to note that he was an ecclesiastic who became Archdeacon of Monmouth, that from 1152 to 1154, the year of his death, he was Bishop of St. Asaph, and that between 1130–1150 he wrote three works now generally<sup>2</sup> accepted as his—the *Prophetia Merlini* (before 1136),<sup>3</sup> the *Historia Regum Britannie* (about 1136),<sup>4</sup> and the *Vita Merlini* (between 1140 and 1150).

<sup>1</sup> On the whole the best account of him is in Ward's *Catalogue of Romances*, i. pp. 203–222.

<sup>2</sup> But not universally, as we shall see a little later.

<sup>3</sup> Ward, *Catalogue of Romances*, i. 207.

<sup>4</sup> G. Paris, *Hist. Litt. de la France*, xxx. pp. 4, 5. Various dates are assigned for the *Hist. Reg. Brit.*:—

(1) Low and Pulling's *Dict. of Eng. Hist.*, 1130 A.D.

(2) Ten Brink, *Gesch. der engl. Lit.* i. 168, 1132–1135 A.D.

The *Prophetia* was afterwards incorporated with the *Historia*, of which it now forms the seventh book.<sup>1</sup>

The first question naturally arising with regard to each of these books is: From what materials are they constructed? In searching for the sources of Geoffrey's *Historia* it is hardly possible to advance far.<sup>2</sup> The most obvious source is the *Historia Britonum* of Nennius. As for the British book brought from the Continent by Archdeacon Walter of Oxford, we know nothing about it, and we gain little by multiplying conjectures

(3) *Encyc. Brit.* xx. p. 643—"The Round Table romances had their starting-point in Geoffrey's *Historia*, first published in 1138-39, revised and republished in its present form in 1147."

(4) Ward, *Catal. of Romances*, i. 209—"The first edition of Geoffrey's *Historia* was certainly completed by the end of 1138."

(5) Paulin Paris and Sir F. Madden, 1135-1147 A.D.

(6) Cf. Arnold, *Introd.* to Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum* (Rolls Series), pp. xxii., xxiii.

<sup>1</sup> On the *Prophecies*, Professor Henry Morley has the following remark, the last clause of which is a good example of the baseless statements that have found their way into so many works on the literature of the period we are treating:—"Afterwards he made alterations, and formed the work into eight books; to which he added Merlin's *Prophecies* translated out of Cymric verse into Latin prose."—*English Writers*, iii. 45.

<sup>2</sup> "Assurément il a beaucoup,—et très pauvrement,—inventé; mais il s'est appuyé, en beaucoup de points, sur des légendes galloises, sur des contes populaires qu'il a arbitrairement rattachés à des noms de rois (Lear, Bladud, etc.)."—G. Paris, *Romania*, xii. 372.

Compare with the above note the following:—

"That Geoffrey drew his materials from British sources, and did not coin any of them, seems to us the legitimate conclusion to be drawn from a careful study of the whole subject. His book is, however, a compilation and not a translation, at all events no book now exists which can be regarded as his original, while all the *Bruts* or chronicles are posterior to Geoffrey's book and based upon it."—*Encyc. Brit.* 9th ed., art. *Celtic Lit.*

On the specific question of the origin of Geoffrey's *Merlin*, A. Brandl remarks:—

"Ähnlich bunt mag Geoffrey die Figur des Merlin, des Propheten beim letzten Brittenkönig Vortigern, zusammengestellt haben, mit Elementen aus der Legende von St. Germanus, aus druidischer Mystik, aus Daniel und den XV. *Signa ante judicium*, nach deren Art Merlin schliesslich den Weltuntergang weissagt."—Paul's *Grundriss der germ. Philologie*, ii. 621.

For further details, see the discussion of the question whether we have to deal with one Merlin or two, and the discussion of the sources of Robert de Borron's *Merlin*.

with regard to it. Paulin Paris<sup>1</sup> supposed that the Latin chronicle of Nennius was the original text or a translation of the famous British book. Of course this is not impossible, but hardly probable.<sup>2</sup>

Gaston Paris finds the origin of Geoffrey's *Historia* in the

<sup>1</sup> *Romans de la Table Ronde*, i. 38. Geoffrey, remarks M. Paris, merely expanded Nennius, writing a line for a word, and a paragraph for a sentence, and pieced out the whole with the help of his Latin reading, Vergil, Ovid, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Those who are interested in the question may follow it up in Ward's *Catalogue of Romances*, i. p. 214 *sqq.*, where the views of P. Paris are controverted, and the whole matter discussed at length. Mr. Ward thinks that a Breton book may have existed:—

“But there are really some grounds for supposing that Walter left behind him a book, resembling Geoffrey's *Historia*, yet distinct from it, though there is nothing to prove whether it was his own composition or the book which he brought from abroad.”—p. 214.

“The Breton book, then, we hold, was not a mere copy of Nennius. At the same time it is evident that whoever drew up the scheme of the present *Historia* had the work of Nennius before him, and made arbitrary changes in certain facts derived from it.”—p. 217.

Mr. Ward remarks further on the origin of Geoffrey's *Historia*: “But the Arthur legend had travelled south, and had been immensely developed, before the days of Geoffrey. At all events, it was not he who invented the fiction, that Arthur was born and mortally wounded in Cornwall. The monks of Laon,<sup>a</sup> who visited Cornwall in 1113, were shown rocks called Arthur's Chair and Arthur's Furnace, and were told that this was his native land, ‘secundum fabulas Britanorum regis Arturi’; and at Bodmin they narrowly escaped bloodshed when they refused to believe that Arthur was still alive. (See Hermannus, *De miraculis S. Marie Laudunensis*, book ii. 15, 16, republished by Migne, *Patrologia*, tom. 156, col. 983.) These monks also inform us that similar Arthurian fables were rife in Brittany. Finally, considering that Geoffrey's Arthur is a grandson of an Armorican prince, and that his Armorican cousin Hoel is his brother in arms both at home and in Gaul; and considering that Cadwalader finds a last hope for his degenerate Bretons in the princes of Armorica; one can hardly doubt Geoffrey's deriving much of the latter part of his *Historia* from Breton sources. Whether he followed (or, as he terms it, translated) any regular book, or whether he collected materials and arranged them himself, can never be completely decided.”—*Ibid.* i. 217, 218.

Mr. Ward's opinion may be compared with that of M. Gaston Paris:—“Je suis au contraire tout à fait de l'avis de M. de la Borderie sur la seconde question qu'il traite, celle de la provenance galloise et non bretonne, des fables de Gaufré. Celui-ci prétend à trois reprises avoir trouvé l'histoire des rois bretons dans un livre écrit *Britannico sermone*, que lui avait fait connaître son ami Gautier, archidiacre d'Oxford. Il ment certainement, car on a prouvé qu'il reproduisait textuellement des phrases latines d'écrivains antérieurs, et que par conséquent il ne traduisait pas du Gallois. Il se contredit d'ailleurs: il prétend à un endroit (xii. 20) qu'il a simplement

<sup>a</sup> On the visit of the monks of Laon, compare Zimmer, *Zeits. für franz. u. Lit.* xlii. p. 106.

*Historia Britonum* of Nennius taken as a groundwork, and supplemented by the tales told him by his friend Walter of Oxford, and by his own recollections of Welsh legends. Gaston Paris even admits the existence of a British book, for "the forms of many of the proper names of the *Historia Regum* are often more archaic than those of Nennius";<sup>1</sup> but M. Paris is careful to remark that Geoffrey did not translate from the Welsh.

traduit le livre gallois (*in latinum sermonem transferre curavi*), et à un autre (xi. 1) il dit qu'il écrit tant d'après ce livre que d'après les récits de Gautier (*ut Gaufridus in Britannico prefato sermone invenit et a Gualtero Oxinefordensi audivit*). La vérité est à mon sens, dans cette dernière phrase. C'est avec l'*Historia Britonum* d'une part et les récits de son ami Gautier, ainsi que ses propres souvenirs de contes gallois d'autre part que Gaufrei a composé son roman. Quant au fameux livre gallois, il a existé : les formes de beaucoup de noms propres de l'*Historia regum*, formes souvent plus archaïques que celles de Nennius . . . et que Gaufrei n'a pu inventer, montrent qu'il a eu sous les yeux des documents fort anciens ; en quoi ils consistaient, et s'ils contenaient autre chose que des listes de noms propres, c'est ce qu'il faudrait étudier de près. Mais pourquoi, en parlant de ce livre, Gaufrei dit-il que Gautier le lui a 'apporté de Bretagne' (*ex Britannia advexit*) ? On a compris jusqu'à présent que *Britannia* désignait ici la Petite-Bretagne." G. Paris follows de la Borderie in thinking Great Britain to be meant, and indeed the whole of it, and not Wales, as de la Borderie supposed. He continues :—"L'explication du problème est, à mon sens, bien plus simple. Toute la difficulté repose sur ce point : puisque Gaufrei était en Grande-Bretagne, comment pouvait-on lui apporter un livre de Grande-Bretagne ? Mais il y a pétition de principe. Rien ne nous prouve que Gaufrei fût en Grande-Bretagne quand il écrivait son livre, et il y a même des vraisemblances pour qu'il fût en Normandie. Si Gaufrei était en Normandie, on comprend très bien qu'il prétende que le livre gallois qu'il dit traduire lui a été apporté de Grande-Bretagne par Gautier d'Oxford, et ainsi disparaît toute difficulté sur ce passage. Un mot encore sur les sources de Gaufrei. Il avait très probablement trouvé dans quelque cloître de Normandie un exemplaire de l'*Historia Britonum*, et, croyant cet ouvrage inconnu en Angleterre, il s'était mis à l'exploiter, en s'aidant de divers auteurs latins, pour en tirer sa grandiose mystification. Il reçut sans doute, pendant qu'il y travaillait, la visite de son ami Gautier d'Oxford, qui lui apporta quelque document gallois, et tout deux arrangèrent en commun l'imposture qui devait avoir tant de succès : il fut convenu que Gautier aurait apporté à Gaufrei une histoire complète des rois bretons, qui contenait toutes les belles choses que celui-ci allait apprendre au monde. On a vu que Gaufrei n'avait même pas su soutenir ce mensonge sans se contredire. Tout ce qui, dans son livre, n'est pas tiré de l'*Historia Britonum* (ou d'autres ouvrages latins) repose, sauf ce qui pouvait se trouver dans le document en question, sur l'invention ou sur les contes populaires gallois, recueillis par Gautier et par lui. C'est à la critique à s'efforcer de discerner ce qui doit être attribué à l'une ou à l'autre de ces provenances."—*Romania*, xii. 372-375.

<sup>1</sup> *Romania*, xii. 372, 373.



From all this discussion may be inferred, as in the case of Nennius, the need of extreme caution in the construction of a theory designed to explain all the facts. Nothing really convincing is to be deduced from the evidence. Some of the theories advanced are not impossible; and with this comfort we must be as content as we can.

As for the *Vita Merlini*, it also has been the subject of much discussion.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Ward (*Catalogue of Romances*, i. 278-288) gives an excellent account of the arguments in favour of its genuineness, which is not now seriously questioned by most scholars.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For instance, in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (9th ed.) some of the contributors affirm, while others deny, its genuineness. In the article on *Romance* we read concerning Geoffrey of Monmouth: "His poem on the *Life and Prophecies of Merlin* was a separate work, published in 1136-1137, and again in 1149"; while in the article on Geoffrey of Monmouth we read: "Internal evidence is fatal to the claims of the second," i.e. the *Vita Merlini*.

Henry Morley (*English Writers*, iii. p. 44) says: "There has also been improperly ascribed to him [Geoff. of Mon.] a life of Merlin, in Latin hexameters."

Compare with these authorities the opinion of Gaston Paris:—

"Gaufrei, quelques années après l'*Historia*, composa un autre ouvrage, la *Vita Merlini*, poème assez élégamment écrit, où des traditions historiques bretonnes se mêlent à des contes venus d'orient ou courant dans les écoles, et qui n'a pas été sans influence sur quelques romans français postérieurs."—*La Litt. Française au moyen Âge*, p. 90.

Also: "Gaufrei composa en hexamètres latins sa *Vita Merlini*, dans laquelle il mêla des notions de géographie et d'histoire naturelle, empruntées aux écrivains classiques, à des contes populaires bretons dont la plupart se retrouvent ailleurs, et à quelques nouvelles prédictions."—*Hist. Litt. de la France*, xxx. p. 5.

Paulin Paris had already advanced about the same opinion (*Romans*, i. 77) in opposition to the views of Thomas Wright and Francisque Michel. He says:—

"Il faut absolument en conclure que le poème a été composé avant les romans, c'est à dire de 1140 à 1150. Ainsi tout se réunit pour conserver à Geoffroy de Monmouth l'honneur d'avoir écrit vers le milieu du douzième siècle, le poème *De Vita Merlini* après l'*Historia Britonum* que semble continuer le poème pour ce qui touche à Merlin, et avant le roman français de *Merlin*, qui devait faire un poème d'assez nombreux emprunts."

<sup>2</sup> The earliest printed edition appeared in 1833 for the Roxburghe Club, under the editorship of William Henry Black. This edition was fortunately limited to forty-two copies; for it was as bad as bad could be. The second, and in fact the only edition based upon the manuscripts,<sup>a</sup> is that of Wright and Michel, since

<sup>a</sup> G. Paris, *Hist. Litt. de la France*, xxx. p. 5, says there is but one MS.; but cf. Ward's *Cat. of Romances*.

For convenience we may defer all further account of the *Vita Merlini* and the other Latin sources till we have examined the extant Celtic literature that tells us of Myrddin the Bard. Here, too, we find it necessary in the first place to determine the genuineness of the Welsh poems that touch upon Myrddin. We cannot here attempt an exhaustive discussion, but we may trace in a few words the varying attitude of critical opinion toward the few poems that concern the question before us, and set in order the results of the investigations which none but advanced Celtic specialists are competent to make. The data are so meagre that we may perhaps never hope to get more than a probable solution of the difficulties starting up at every turn. There is here a tempting field for an ingenious constructive critic, for in this matter one can conjecture much and prove little.

One caution, however, we should observe from the outset. We must not forget that it is one thing to find in Welsh poems of doubtful age a meagre account of a bard named Myrddin, and in a modern Breton ballad or two the figure of Myrddin<sup>1</sup> the Bard and Myrddin the Enchanter, and quite another thing to show that these throw any real light on the legend as we find it in the French prose romance of Merlin. If we accept the genuineness of the poems ascribed to Myrddin or which make mention of him,—and there is really no great harm in doing so,—we have advanced scarcely a step in tracing out the source of the legend as found in Nennius, in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia*, or in any of the translations or imitations of Geoffrey's *Historia*. As the investigation proceeds, we shall hardly be

San-Marte did no more than to reprint the text and annotate it. Our edition of the *Vita Merlini* really dates, therefore, from 1837, when it appeared under the title: "Galfridi de Monumeta . . . Vita Merlini. Vie de Merlin attribuée à Geoffroy de Monmouth . . . par Francisque Michel et Thomas Wright. Parisiis, Silvestre, London, W. Pickering, 1837." This edition has become rare.

San-Marte follows Michel and Wright in rejecting Geoffrey of Monmouth as the author, and thinks the poem to have been written soon after 1216. *Die Sagen von Merlin*, p. 271.

<sup>1</sup> Or Marzin.

able to escape the conclusion that—whether or not we accept Geoffrey's story of the Breton book—he based his work upon materials almost, if not quite, independent of any preserved to us in Welsh literature. This Welsh literature is of great interest in that it shows us how the legendary history might have arisen, but it affords a very slender basis for a working theory as to the origin of the French romance.

In studying the Celtic literature we shall find it to be no small gain in clearness to put aside at the outset all that is conceded to have nothing to do with either Myrddin or Merlin. The Celtic literature is preserved in three great groups—the Gaelic, the Breton or Armorican, and the Welsh.

I. The first of these groups, the Gaelic, has nothing original relating to Myrddin or Merlin, and it became possessed of the legend of Merlin only through translation. The only piece relating to Merlin of which we have any knowledge in Irish literature is the eleventh-century version of Nennius; while not till many generations later was the verse romance of *Arthur and Merlin* translated into Irish prose.<sup>1</sup> The fact that so scanty use was made of the legend, even in its borrowed form, is a sufficient proof that the historical bard and the legendary prophet were strangers to the great body<sup>2</sup> of old Irish literature.

II. It would hardly be necessary to consider the extant Armorican literature at all, were it not that Villemarqué, in a series of studies<sup>3</sup> in Celtic literature, made great capital out of Marzin ballads that he pretended to have found in Brittany.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. F. Michel, *Vita Merlini*, p. lxxxii.

<sup>2</sup> How great this body of Irish literature is may be seen from the estimate of a learned German, who has calculated that to publish all the Irish literature, inclusive of MSS. from the eleventh to the sixteenth century, would require about a thousand volumes, 8vo. Cf. Jubainville, *La Litt. Celtique*, i. 43.

<sup>3</sup> Th. Hersart de la Villemarqué, *Contes Populaires des anciens Bretons*. 2 vols. Paris, 1842; *Barzaz-Breiz, Chants Populaires de la Bretagne . . . avec une traduction française*. 2 vols. Paris, 1846; *Poèmes des Bardes Bretons du 6<sup>e</sup> siècle*. Paris, 1850; *Les Romans de la Table Ronde*. 1 vol. Paris, 1860, 3rd ed.; *Myrddin ou l'Enchanteur Merlin, son histoire, ses œuvres, son influence*. Paris, 1862 (actually printed, 1861).

Modern criticism rejects the ballads relating to Marzin the Bard<sup>1</sup> and Marzin the Enchanter, and pronounces them "impositions, of which," as Mr. Phillimore assures me, "no original or basis has been found in the country." The authenticity of the *Barzas-Breiz*, as a whole, has been the subject of considerable discussion, but the question does not belong here.<sup>2</sup> We are chiefly concerned to know that the literature of Brittany is scarcely older than the fifteenth century,<sup>3</sup> and that it maintained its precarious existence only by borrowing from the Latin and the French.<sup>4</sup> We cannot deny the possible existence of Armorican literary documents more ancient than any now extant, but we are quite in the dark as to what they may have contained concerning Merlin. Even though we were to grant that the ballads on Marzin, instead of being modern forgeries, are based on genuine Breton traditions, we should find them of little service for our purpose. Considered as contributions to folklore they would then possess a certain degree of interest, but the assistance they would render in determining out of what materials our romance was formed would be exceedingly slight.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Villemarqué asserted the forged poem on Marzin the Bard to be earlier than the age of chivalry, and to belong to a time between the sixth and the tenth century. San-Marte, on the other hand, was inclined to refer it to the fourteenth century (*Sagen von Merlin*, p. 230), and to regard it, along with the short poem on Marzin the Enchanter, as an interesting proof that Merlin was known in a twofold character among a people who, like the insular Britons, regarded Merlin as one of their own countrymen.

<sup>2</sup> Anyone interested in this question may study it in the following discussions:— (1) Le Men, *Athenæum*, April 11, 1868, p. 527. (2) D'Arbois de Jubainville, *Bibl. de l'École des Chartes*, 3<sup>e</sup> sér. t. iii. p. 265–281; t. v. p. 621 . . . (3) *Idem. Rev. Archéol.* t. xx. (4) *Idem. Rev. Critique*, 16 Févr. and 23 Nov. 1867, 3 Oct. 1868. (5) Liebrecht, *Gött. Gelehrte Anzeigen*, 7 April, 1869. (6) Jubainville, *Encore un mot sur le Barzas-Breiz*, Paris, 1873. (7) *Rev. Celtique*, t. ii. (8) Sayce, *Science of Language*, ii. p. 86.

<sup>3</sup> W. D. Whitney, in *Language and the Study of Lang.* p. 218, says that one or two brief works go back to the fourteenth century, or even farther.

<sup>4</sup> Jubainville, *La Litt. Celtique*, vol. i. Introduction, p. 42.

<sup>5</sup> We are dealing primarily with origins, but we may note that Merlin figures in a Breton drama entitled *Buhez Santez Nonn*, or *Life of Sainte Nonne and of her son St. Devy* (F. Michel, *Vita Merlini*, p. lxxxiii.), and that very recently Louise d'Isole

III. In the face of these facts we must therefore confine our attention to the remaining branch of Celtic literature—the Cymric or Welsh. This, however, affords us much less light than might be desired. The most detailed accounts of Merlin Ambrosius<sup>1</sup> that we find in Welsh literature are contained in the so-called *Bruts*,<sup>2</sup> but these need detain us only a moment; for we need no longer refute Villemarqué's opinion<sup>3</sup> that the

has brought out a poem entitled *Merlin*, poème breton, 2<sup>e</sup> éd. revue et corrigée, avec une préface de Louis Frechette, Paris, 1877, 12mo. The *Buhez Santez Nonn* has been recently edited with a translation in the *Revue Celtique*.

<sup>1</sup> Or *Myrddin Emrys*. In referring to Welsh literature I shall usually adopt this spelling. On the form of the name Mr. E. G. B. Phillimore sends me the following note:—"The only possible variant in modern Welsh is *Myrddin Emraïs*. *Ambrosius* makes both *Emrys* and *Emraïs* in Welsh: in Middle and Old Welsh these would be written with an *i* or *y*, or even an *e* for the *y*, and a regular *ei* with a possible variant *e* for the modern *ai*; of course, some people—archaic purists who despise the modern *ai*—would spell *Emreis* now. As to *Myrddin*, it is the *only* form in current Welsh. *Dd* in modern Welsh is equal to the *th* in *the*, *that*, *this*, etc. In Old and Middle Welsh they had practically no character for it; the barred *d* (*ð*, *ŷ* or the like) occurring, but being very rare. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries both the *ŷ* and the *d̄h* were used, but finally disused for the *dd*. For the *y* of *Myrddin*, *e*, *i*, or *y* would be used in Old and Middle Welsh. The sound is that of French mute *e*: in the oldest Welsh would probably be written *o*, but *Mordin* does not occur. It was often written; from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century by certain scholars and writers. *Myrdin* is simply the *Middle Welsh* orthography. *Marzin* is Villemarqué's deliberate Bretonization of the word. They have not the sound of *d* in Breton, except, I believe, in one or two sub-dialects: *z* takes the place in usual Breton of both sounds, *th* in *the*, and *th* in *thing*. The barred *ŷ* of Professor Rhŷs' Hibbert Lectures is meant to guide people who are puzzled by the barbarous Welsh *dd*. Nor have they in Breton the "obscure" sound of Welsh *;*; so Villemarqué altered it into *a*, their nearest sound. Skene's Welsh orthography is not consistent. He uses modern, Middle, and Old Welsh forms promiscuously and indiscriminately."

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Phillimore notes that "*Brut* is derived, not from an originally Welsh word, but from the word *Brutus* through Norman-French or English. It was used to mean a chronicle in these languages, and derived from *Brutus*, as in Wace's *Brut*. Originally it meant a chronicle beginning with Brutus or the like. The history of the transference of the word to Welsh is all that is obscure. In Rhŷs and Evans' *Bruts from the Red Book of Hergest* (Oxford, 1890), this question is gone into in a note in the preface. The word *Brut* for a chronicle occurs in Welsh before it does in English MSS., but that proves nothing."

<sup>3</sup> *Romans de la Table Ronde*, p. 25; *L'Enchanteur Merlin*, note, p. 99. San-Marte, however, held the same opinion, *Die Sagen von Merlin*, p. 16; and strangely enough, de la Borderie (*Hist. Brit. attribuée à Nennius*, p. 35) refers to "le *Brut* ou *Brenined* (x<sup>e</sup> siècle) et son amplificateur latin, Geoffroi de Monmouth (xiii<sup>e</sup> siècle)."

*Brut y Brenhinoedd* (or the *Brut Tysilio*) was the British original of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia*. This, like the other *Bruts*, is later<sup>1</sup> than Geoffrey of Monmouth, and obviously based upon his work.<sup>2</sup>

The Welsh Triads make mention of Myrddin, but they are of no great importance for our purpose. The details are discussed in the footnote.<sup>3</sup>

Mr. Phillimore remarks that "*er Brenined* is a gross blunder for *y Brenhinoedd*—the usual plural of *Brenin* 'a king'—though *Brenhinedd* also occurs in Middle Welsh; *y* means *the*; *er* does not exist."

<sup>1</sup> P. Paris, *Romans de la Table Ronde*, i. 38; G. Paris, *Romania*, xii. 373; *Encyc. Brit.* 9th ed., art. *Celtic Lit.*

<sup>2</sup> De la Borderie, *Les Véritables Proph. de Merlin*, p. 75, p. 124.

<sup>3</sup> On the Triads Mr. Phillimore sends me the following note:—

"The Triads simply consist of parts or characters taken from early (pre-seventh century) Cymric, and rarely Cornish, history and legend grouped by threes according to some salient characteristic, e.g. 'The three liberal kings were so and so,' etc.; 'The three felon axe-blows were so and so,' etc." "There are several collections of the Triads, the two oldest existing in MSS. of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (call these two *a* and *b*), and others (with a few new ones not found in *a* and *b*) in MSS. of the fifteenth century. All or most of these collections were pieced together by Robert Vaughan, of Hengwrt, the great Welsh collector of MSS., who died about 1667. He used some versions of the fifteenth century, which have never been published, and one at least which I cannot trace. Let us call this mosaic (*c*). Now, sometime—when it cannot exactly be said, but between 1600 and 1800—some one got hold of a great many—not all—of the old versions of the Triads, and also of a later (probably fifteenth-century) compilation called the 'Triads of the Twenty-four Knights,' and served them up with much additional detail and verbiage, and occasionally with important new matter, mostly not found elsewhere. This version, the fullest of all, was first printed in the *Myvyrian Archæology*, vol. 2, and no MS. of it older than the eighteenth century is known to exist, though I do not believe that it was then concocted. Call this (*d*). Now (*d*) is often known, most misleadingly, as 'The Welsh Triads' or 'The Welsh Historical Triads' *par excellence*. I may add that—1. Robert Vaughan's piecework version (*c*); 2. the Red Book of Hergest version (*b*); and 3. the late or spurious *rechauffée* version (*d*), are printed in this order in the *Myvyrian Archæology*, and are thence quoted by Rhys in his Hibbert Lectures as Versions 1, 2, 3, respectively (*b* has since been printed with absolute correctness).

Now, with this light let us come to what Skene says (and de la Borderie purports to quote or refer to in *Les Véritables Prophéties de Merlin*). In *Celtic Scotland*, vol. I. pp. 23, 24, we read: 'Among the Welsh documents which are usually founded upon as affording materials for the early history of the country, there is one class of documents contained in the Myvyrian Archæology which cannot be accepted as genuine. The principal of them are the so-called Historical Triads, which have been usually quoted as possessing undoubted claims to antiquity under

A word ought to be given to the *Mabinogion*, though we really get from them no light on Myrddin. These are a collection of prose tales, a number of which tell of Arthur and the knights of his court. Merlin (Myrddin) is not mentioned

the name of the Welsh Triads . . . . In a former work [p. 24] the author in reviewing these documents [the said Triads and others with which we have nothing to do here, many of which were certainly not concocted in the eighteenth century as Skene thought] merely said, "It is not unreasonable, therefore, to say that they must be received with some suspicion, and that very careful discrimination is required in the use of them." He does not hesitate now to reject them as entirely spurious.' Skene here appends a footnote (No. 15) with the very reservation which de la Borderie ignores — 'See *Four Ancient Books of Wales*, vol. I. pp. 30-32. In rejecting the Welsh Triads which have been so extensively used, the author excepts those Triads which are to be found in ancient MSS., such as the Triads of the Horses in the Black Book of Caermarthen; those in the Hengwrt MS. 536, printed in the *Four Ancient Books of Wales*, vol. II. p. 457; and those in the Red Book of Hergest.'

Skene says also in the work cited, I. p. 172, in a note (No. 11): 'The author confines himself as much as possible to Welsh documents before his [Geoffrey of Monmouth's] time, and the so-called Historical Triads he rejects as entirely spurious.' Also at pp. 195, 196 he says (end of p. 195): 'The Welsh Triads say that the Picts came from Llychlyn, which is Scandinavia.' . . . (p. 196 end): 'The Welsh Triads which contain the passage referred to may now be regarded as spurious.' The passage referred to, with much other ethnological matter, occurs in (d), but in no other collection of Triads. Skene further says in note 50 on p. 197: 'Neither does he refer to the so-called Historic Triads, because he considers them spurious; but among the genuine "Triads of Arthur and his Warriors"' [these are those contained in the Hengwrt MSS. 54 and 536]. 'Id. [in the *Four Ancient Books of Wales*] vol. II. p. 457, there is one to this effect: "Three oppressions came to this island and did not go out of it"' (p. 8).

What Skene means, and what I mean, by 'genuine' is, that the authors wrote down actual tradition or legend which they found to hand; by 'spurious,' that the authors invented some at least of what they record, out of their own heads. The genuine Triads do not purport to be written at any particular date. The oldest MSS. are of about 1225 and 1275 for (a), and 1300-1325 for (b), but contain archaisms and errors of transcription which carry them back each, say, from fifty to a hundred years in their present form. But how much older some of the Triads may or may not be no one can say! Of course (d) is genuine in so far as it copies the older Triads, which it mostly does. Some of its additions and alterations are demonstrably spurious, and the rest cannot be relied upon unless and until corroborated from other sources which have not the same taint."

In the light of Mr. Phillimore's remarks we note that we have two Triads relating to Merlin, both from version (d).

The first I quote is No. 125, which "is entirely peculiar to (d)." This enumerates: "Three principal bards of the Isle of Britain, Myrddin Emrys, Myrddin, son of Morvryn, Taliessin, chief of the bards." Cf. also J. Loth, *Les Mabinogion*, II.

by name, but the combat of the white with the red dragon is found in the story of Llud and Llevelis, much the same as in Nennius and Geoffrey of Monmouth. Criticism has not yet said the last word with regard to the age and authenticity of these tales.<sup>1</sup> But the three romances of *Owein and Lunet*, *Peredur ab Evrawc*, *Geraint and Enid*, agree in many essentials with the three French romances of Chrestien de Troyes,—the *Chevalier au Lyon*, *Perceval le Gallois*, *Erec et Enid*,—all of which were produced in the last half of the twelfth century.<sup>2</sup> Still, according to Loth,<sup>3</sup> “the three *Mabinogion* are no more

p. 268; F. Michel, *Vita Merlini*, p. xvi.; and *The Ancient Laws of Cambria*, translated from the Welsh by William Probert, 1823, p. 413, Triad 125.

The second (*a*) (No. 10) tells of: “Three complete disappearances from the isle of Prydein . . . the second is that of Myrddin, the bard of Emrys Wledig, and of his nine Cylveidd, who directed their way by sea toward the House of Glas.” Cf. J. Loth, *Les Mabinogion*, II. pp. 277, 278. This Triad, as Mr. Phillimore observes, “takes and amplifies *one* subordinate incident from (*a*), copied thence in (*c*), No. 34; but everything concerning Merlin is only in (*d*). Nor does *difancoll* mean necessarily ‘complete disappearances’: *col* is a loss, not a disappearance, and *difancoll* (*difangoll* now) means ‘utter loss,’ whether disappearance or destruction. The Isle of Britain was the consecrated term for the undivided Britondom of the sixth and seventh centuries.”

These two Triads just quoted are very late, and, in Mr. Phillimore's opinion, worthless. He adds: “The only allusion to Merlin or his works which I can find in the genuine Triads are in the Triads of Hengwrt MSS. 54 and 536, Skene's *Four Ancient Books of Wales*, ii. 265—‘The third (concealment and disconcealment\* of the Isle of Britain was) the dragons which Llud, son of Beli, buried (al. concealed) in Dinas Emreis, in Eryni.’ (Eryni roughly answers to Snowdonia.) There is the same statement in one of the Red-Book Triads; but nothing more that I can find.”

\* “This is not the best word, but it means the uncovering of what has been concealed.”

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Phillimore says of the *Mabinogion*, that they are conceded to be Celtic, “excepting the versions of Ywein, Perceval, and Erec, and perhaps the Llud and Llevelis. The stories and incidents are purely Celtic, though here and there you will get a lay-figure dragged in from France, as you will from Ireland and other non-Welsh countries. I dare say the manner of telling the Tales may have been indirectly influenced by the French story-tellers, but that is the utmost. As for Llud and Llevelis, it occurs intercalated in some of the Welsh translations or adaptations of Geoffrey of Monmouth, but is a Welsh addition to the Latin of the original text.”

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Loth, *Les Mabinogion*, i. p. 13; also G. Paris, *Hist. Litt. de la France*, xxx.

<sup>3</sup> *Les Mabinogion*, i. p. 15.



translated from Chrétien de Troyes than the poems of Chrétien de Troyes are translated or imitated from them. They all mount to one common source, that is to say, the French romances written in England and based upon British legends; the originals have disappeared, and we have preserved nothing of them but mutilated imitations. It would perhaps be going too far to affirm that the three *Mabinogion* are literally translated from the French, but it is very evident that they follow closely a French source. As for the primitive basis of these tales, it is generally admitted to be of Celtic origin. The Celtic legends of the country of Wales were early known by the Normans after the conquests of England."

I have touched upon the *Mabinogion*, not because the tales yield us much information with regard to Merlin (Myrddin), but because they yield so little. It is certainly rather surprising that a long series of Celtic stories, several of which tell us of Arthur, should make no reference to the great Merlin (Myrddin), unless, indeed, some one chooses to see in this very fact a slight confirmation of the historical character of the bard Myrddin of the sixth century, who had not (as one might urge) been invested in genuine works of Celtic imagination with the legendary character that the enchanter Merlin assumes in the Latin chronicles and the French romances.

There remain to be examined the Welsh poems that contain allusions to Myrddin. If we accept these poems as genuine works of the sixth century, we have nothing more than a few obscure fragments, the full import of which is perhaps even yet not rightly interpreted.

The publication of Old Welsh texts is comparatively recent.<sup>1</sup> It began in 1764, when the Rev. Evan Evans brought out his *Specimens of the Poetry of the Ancient Welsh Bards*. Twenty years later, Edward Jones published his *Musical and Poetical*

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Skene, *Four Ancient Books of Wales*, i. pp. 4-18.

*Relics of the Welsh Bards.* Following this work appeared in 1792 Dr. Owen Pughe's collection, *The Heroic Elegies and other Pieces of Llywarch-Hen*. The first really important publication of old Welsh poems was made in the year 1801, when the first two volumes of the *Myvyrian Archaeology* (sic) of *Wales* were published by Owen Jones, a London furrier, Edward Williams (Iolo Morganwg) a stone-mason, and William Owen, later known as William Owen Pughe. A third volume followed in 1807.<sup>1</sup> The lively controversy which at once arose over these poems—helped on doubtless by the recollection of the extravagant claims made for MacPherson's pseudo-Gaelic Ossian—was for a time brought to an end by the publication in 1803 of Sharon Turner's *Vindication of the genuineness of the Ancient British Poems of Aneurin, Taliessin, Llywarch-Hen, and Myrddin*, though, as Gaston Paris remarks, he really proved nothing. Since Turner's day critical opinion has vibrated between alternate acceptance and rejection of these poems. Villemarqué, although a strenuous defender of the Celtic origin of the Merlin (Myrddin) legend, preferred to regard Brittany as the original home of the bard, and did not hesitate to affirm that none of the poems attributed to Myrddin could be accepted as genuine.<sup>2</sup> In 1849 Thomas Stephens published a careful study of these old poems in his *Literature of the Kymry*. He, too, refused to accept any of the poems as genuine products of the sixth century.<sup>3</sup> Still more careful and critical was the investigation of the entire subject of early Welsh literature by W. F. Skene in the *Four Ancient Books of Wales* (1868). Here appeared all of the texts of the poems in

<sup>1</sup> The whole reprinted in one volume, royal 8vo. Denbigh, 1861, and in one volume, small 4to. Denbigh, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> "On ne peut pas citer une seule pièce, une seule strophe originale de ce barde : toutes portent des traces nombreuses de remaniements."—Villemarqué, *Poèmes des Bardes Bretons*, q. v.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Skene, *Four Ancient Books of Wales*, i. 12.

question with a literal translation,<sup>1</sup> and a series of critical dissertations on the genuineness of the poems. This was the first discussion of the matter on the basis of a really critical text. Mr. Skene's investigations led him to the following conclusions: "That the bards to whom these poems are in the main attributed are recorded as having lived in the sixth century, is certain. We have it on the authority of the *Genealogia*<sup>2</sup> attached to Nennius, written in the eighth century.<sup>3</sup> That this record of their having lived in that age is true we have every reason to believe, and we may hold that there were such bards as Taliessin, Llywarch-Hen, and Myrddin at that early period, who were believed to have written poems."<sup>4</sup>

Mr. Skene is recognized as a foremost authority on this question, but his views have not won entire acceptance.<sup>5</sup> Yet even if we accept all the poems as genuine and ancient, and include the interpolations as well as the evidently spurious poems rejected by Mr. Skene, we have but a shadowy outline of the personality of the Bard Myrddin. For the sake of

<sup>1</sup> By the Rev. D. Silvan Evans and the Rev. Robert Williams: *cf.* i. 7-17.

<sup>2</sup> The passage referred to is found in the ordinary editions of Nennius, sec. 62. "At that time Talhaiarn Cataguen was famed for poetry, and Neirin and Taliesin and Bluchbard and Cian, who is called Guenith Guant, were all famous at the same time in British poetry" (Gunn's translation, edited by J. A. Giles). There is no mention of Myrddin in Nennius. Mr. Phillimore adds that "Llywarch-Hen is not mentioned either by the author of the '*Genealogia*.' The old identification of Llywarch (Old Welsh *Loumarch* or Leumarch) with Bluchbard is too insane! *et Neirin* is a mistranslation of the Welsh *Aneirin*, a in Welsh meaning *and*. The MSS. read *Tat Aguen*, not *Cataguen* (modern Welsh *Tad Awen*, Pater Poseos). Guenith Guant, now Gwenith Gwawd. The '*Genealogia*' attached to Nennius have nothing to do with Nennius. They were merely accidentally tacked on an edition of Nennius represented by only four very nearly related MSS. They are a distinct work entirely."

<sup>3</sup> On this date compare our discussion of Nennius, *ante*.

<sup>4</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, i. 184.

<sup>5</sup> *Cf.* for example, the article on *Celtic Literature* in the *Encyc. Brit.* 9th ed. 1876. G. Paris remarks on these poems — "Je suis très porté, pour ma part, à croire qu'il n'y a rien d'authentique du tout, mais on ne pourra le décider que quand on aura appliqué à ces productions bizarres l'instrument de la critique philologique." — *Romania*, xii. 375.

clearness we can perhaps hardly do better than to take up in order each of the Welsh poems that in any way refers to Myrddin. Of these poems eight<sup>1</sup> have been attributed to Myrddin; but they are not all accepted as genuine by either Mr. Skene or M. de la Borderie; nor do these two eminent critics exactly agree with each other as to what is genuine and what is spurious.

These differences of opinion as to just which of these poems were indubitably composed in the sixth century are not reassuring to one who naturally defers to the judgment of recognized specialists in things Celtic. In such a case a layman can hardly do more than silently to place the conflicting opinions side by side, and move on. In our examination we may best begin with the two poems that are least doubtful—*The Dialogue between Myrddin and Taliessin*, and the *Avallenau*.<sup>2</sup>

I.—The *Dialogue between Myrddin and Taliessin* adds but little to our knowledge. Its chief importance for our purpose is that it helps to establish the existence of a bard bearing the name Myrddin.<sup>3</sup> He is represented as talking with Taliessin concerning the battle of Arderydd, and expressing sadness at the slaughter.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. de la Borderie's list in *Les Véritables Proph. de Merlin*, p. 57 (ed. 1884), with that given by F. Michel, *Vita Merlini*, pp. liv., lv. Also Skene, *Four Ancient Books of Wales*, i. p. 222.

<sup>2</sup> Skene, *Four Ancient Books of Wales*, i. pp. 222, 223; de la Borderie, *Les Véritables Proph. de Merlin*, p. 116. De la Borderie remarks also, p. 81 — "Quoi qu'il en soit, dans le *Dialogue de Taliésin et de Merlin* et dans les *Afallenau* du *Livre Noir*, nous avons (nous croyons l'avoir prouvé) deux poèmes historiques fort curieux, dont l'authenticité, l'attribution à Merlin, ne sauraient souffrir plus de difficulté que celle des poèmes attribués jusqu'ici sans contestation sérieuse—par M. Stephens lui-même—à Lywarch-Hen et à Taliésin."

<sup>3</sup> Cf. J. Loth, *Les Mabinogion*, ii. p. 268, note.

<sup>4</sup> It will be instructive to put, side by side, the translation of the *Dialogue between Myrddin and Taliessin*, as given by Davies<sup>a</sup> and followed by San-Marte,<sup>b</sup> and the translation of the same, as given in Skene's *Four Ancient Books of Wales*.<sup>c</sup> A few specimens will suffice.

<sup>a</sup> *Mythol.* p. 549. <sup>b</sup> *Die Sagen von Merlin*, pp. 138-140. <sup>c</sup> Vol. i. pp. 368-370. This translation is by Rev. D. Silvan Evans. (See i. 17.)

In the sixth stanza Taliessin speaks :

“ The host of Maelgwn, it was fortunate that they came—  
Slaughtering men of battle, penetrating the gory plain,  
Even the action of Ardderyd [Arderydd], when there will be  
a crisis,  
Continually for the hero they will prepare.”

In the eleventh stanza Myrddin says :

“ Seven-score generous ones have gone to the shades ;  
In the wood of Celyddon they came to their end.  
Since I, Myrd[d]in, am next after Taliessin,  
Let my prediction become common.”

II.—*The Avalleuau*, observes Mr. Skene, contains passages (already pointed out by Stephens), “ which could not have

DAVIES.

*Myrddin.*

I.—How great my sorrow ! How woful  
has been the treatment of Kedwy and  
the boat ! Unanimous was the assault,  
with gleaming swords. From the  
piercing conflict, one shield escaped.—  
Alas, how deplorable !

*Taliessin.*

II.—It was Maelgwn, whom I saw, with  
piercing weapon (sic) before the  
master of the fair herd. His master  
will not be silent.

*Myrddin.*

III.—Before the two personages they  
land in the celestial circle—before the  
passing form, and the fixed form over  
the pale white boundary. The grey  
stones they actually remove. Soon is  
Elgan and his retinue discovered—for  
his slaughter, alas ! how great the  
vengeance that ensued !

SKENE.

*Myrddin.*

How sad with me, how sad !  
Have Cedwyv and Cadvan perished ?  
Glaring and tumultuous was the slaughter ;  
Perforated was the shield from Trywruyd  
[Tryfrwydd].<sup>a</sup>

*Taliessin.*

It was Maelgwn that I saw combating.  
His household before the tumult of the  
host is not silent.

*Myrddin.*

Before two men in Nevtur will they land,  
Before Errith and Gurrith on a pale  
white horse.  
The slender bay they will undoubtedly  
bear away.  
Soon will his retinue be seen with Elgan.  
Alas ! for his death a great journey they  
came.

<sup>a</sup> “ This is the Trifruit of Nennius.”— E. G. P.

been written prior to the time of Henry II.”; but these passages seem to be “interpolations in an older poem.”<sup>1</sup> At best we learn from this poem very little about the personality of the bard,<sup>2</sup> though more than from any other of the Welsh poems.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to these two poems there are a few others of more doubtful age and authenticity, which mention Myrddin and ascribe to him various qualities.

III.—The *Porcellanau* or *Hoianau*—one of the poems of

<sup>1</sup> *Four Anc. Books*, ii. pp. 316, 317. Cf. de la Borderie, *Les Vêrit. Proph. de Merlin*, pp. 62. Skene's text of the *Avallenau* contains 86 lines; San-Marte's, *Die Sagen von Merlin*, pp. 62-78, has 185 lines.

<sup>2</sup> To avoid repetition I will cite nothing at this point from this poem, as I have reserved it for comparison with the *Vita Merlini*.

<sup>3</sup> M. de la Borderie (*Les Vêritables Proph. de Merlin*, p. 72) gives the following account of the *Avallenau*:—“Le barde nous apprend qu'il a été riche, honoré par le roi Gwend[d]oleu, guerrier vaillant dans la forêt de Kelyddon et portant le collier d'or à la bataille d'Arderyd[d]; qu'il a connu les enivrements de l'amour et s'est, avec une jeune fille, promené autour de la tige du pommier tant célébré dans ses vers, c'est-à-dire à la cour du roi, père du jeune exilé dont il annonce le rétablissement (ci-dessus, st. 4, 5, 7). Puis sont venus les jours mauvais. Gwend[d]oleu, son protecteur, ne s'est plus trouvé en état de soutenir sa fortune. Merlin a eu le malheur de causer la mort du fils de Gwendyz, que l'on croit avoir été sa sœur et la femme de R[h]yd[d]jerch. De là le disgrâce où il est tombé vis-à-vis de R[h]yd[d]jerch, de ses serviteurs et de Gwendyz; disgrâce qui l'afflige profondément. Ces chagrins et ces malheurs ont fini par lui déranger l'esprit. Il a erré—ou bien il a cru errer—longtemps et péniblement, parmi les ténèbres et en compagnie des spectres, dans la forêt de Kelyddon. Aussi appelle-t-il maintenant la mort, espérant ainsi entrer dans le cortège splendide du roi des rois (st. 4, 5, 6, 7). Il semble toutefois reprendre raison, vie et espoir, en songeant au triomphe prochain du jeune prince en qui, nous le répétons il y a tout lieu de voir le fils ou l'héritier de Gwend[d]oleu. Un point à noter: Merlin ne parle point de sa vieillesse. Or, quand ils atteignaient cet âge, les bardes bretons du VI<sup>e</sup> siècle—par exemple Lywarch-Hen—ne cessaient de le dire et de geindre sur leurs cheveux blancs, quelquefois en très beaux vers, mais sans jamais craindre de se répéter.

Donc [!] Merlin n'était pas vieux quand il faisait sa pièce des *Pommiers* [*Avallenau*] plusieurs années après la bataille d'Arderyd[d].”

The argument that Myrddin could not have been old because he does not talk precisely like some other bard is certainly a surprising one. We have at most but a few lines with which to construct the entire portrait of Myrddin; and from the purely negative considerations presented by M. de la Borderie we are not warranted in drawing so important an inference.

the Black Book of Caermarthen—is rejected by Mr. Stephens and Mr. Skene as being spurious and late. Like the *Avallenau*, it contains passages not earlier than the time of Henry II.,<sup>1</sup> and really contains nothing to warrant it in being placed earlier than Geoffrey of Monmouth. De la Borderie, however, regards it as containing a few fragments of Merlin's (Myrddin's) work imbedded in a mass of interpolations.<sup>2</sup>

Myrddin is not mentioned by name in the form, but there is a prediction that,

“All the Cymry will be under the same warlike leader;  
His name is Llywelyn, of the line  
Of Gwynedd, one who will overcome.”—STANZA I.

And the speaker says of himself:

“Little does R[h]ydderch Hael know to-night at his feast  
What sleeplessness last night I bore;  
The snow was up to my knees owing to the wariness of the chief,  
Icicles hung to my hair: sad is my fate!”—STANZA X.

“Thin is my covering, for me there is no repose,  
Since the battle of Ardderyd [Ardderydd] it will not concern me,  
Though the sky were to fall, and sea to overflow.”—STANZA XXV.<sup>3</sup>

IV.—*Dialogue between Myrddin and his sister Gwenddydd*<sup>4</sup>  
(the *Cyvoesi*).

<sup>1</sup> *Four Ancient Books of Wales*, ii. 316. Mr. Skene also remarks, i. 209, that the poem “must have been composed either in whole or in part in the reign of Henry II.”

<sup>2</sup> *Les Vérit. Proph. de Merlin*, p. 100, p. 116. A little earlier he remarks, p. 95: “Force nous est donc d’admettre l’existence d’un poème primitif des *Hoianau*, œuvre de Merlin, envahi aux xi<sup>e</sup> et xii<sup>e</sup> siècles par des interpolations successives qui, s’étendant de proche en proche d’une strophe à l’autre, ont fini par dévorer et détruire la pièce entière.”

<sup>3</sup> For the entire poem see *Four Anc. Books*, i. 482.

<sup>4</sup> The English translator spells the name of the bard *Myrdin*. De la Borderie spells the name of the sister *Gwendyz*—*Les Vérit. Proph. de Merlin*, p. 57. Mr. Phillimore remarks that the name should have been Bretonized *Gwenzyz*.

If we could accept this dialogue as genuine,<sup>1</sup> we should get considerable information from it with regard to Myrddin, but in all probability it is a late piece of work, and consequently of little value for our purpose. Some of the passages are instructive, in that they show how little we learn from these Welsh poems even when they are most specific<sup>2</sup>—

MYRDDIN II. Since the action of Ardderyd [Arderydd] and Erydon,  
Gwend[d]ydd, and all that will happen to me,  
Dull of understanding, to what place of festivity  
shall I go?

GWENDDYDD III. I will address my twin-brother<sup>3</sup>  
Myrd[d]in, a wise man and a diviner.

M. XII. As Gwenddoleu was slain in the bloodshed of  
Ardderyd [Arderydd],  
And I wonder why I should be perceived.

G. XIII. Thy head is of the colour of winter hoar;  
God has relieved thy necessities.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Skene, *Four Anc. Books*, i. pp. 234–241, rejects it as spurious, and adds: “The form of the prophecy in the *Hoianau* is obviously the same as that in the third part of the *Cyvoesi*, which I consider to have been produced in South Wales in the twelfth century.” And de la Borderie in turn observes: “A nos yeux, si l’on excepte les quinze dernières stances (117–131), dont nous parlerons plus loin, les *Kyvoesi* est une insipide rapsodie chronologique fabriquée au xii<sup>e</sup> ou au xiii<sup>e</sup> siècle par un barde pédant, qui avait sous les yeux Nennius, Geoffroi de Monmouth, Caradoc de Lancarvan.”—*Les Vérit. Proph. de Merlin*, pp. 83, 84.

<sup>2</sup> For the entire poem see *Four Anc. Books*, i. 462 *sqq.* The Roman numerals in the passages I quote refer to the stanzas.

<sup>3</sup> On this passage the Rev. T. Price (*Literary Remains*, i. 143, quoted in *Four Anc. Books*, ii. 424) has an important remark: “It is worthy of note that Gwenddydd in this dialogue addresses Myrddin by the appellation of Llallogan, twin-brother . . .” Now this will explain a passage in the Life of St. Kentigern, in which it is said that there was at the court of R[*A*]ydderch Hael a certain idiot named Laloicen who uttered predictions. “In curia ejus quidam homo fatuus vocabulo Laloicen;” and in the *Scotichronicon* it is stated that this Laloicen was *Myrddin Wyllt*. By connecting these several particulars, we find an air of truth cast over the history of this bard, as regards the principal incidents of his life, and there can be no reason to doubt that some of the poetry attributed to him was actually his composition.”

Mr. Ward also touches upon the same matter in discussing Cott. MS. Titus A. xix. “The prose narrative (at f. 74) of the meeting of Merlin and St. Kentigern (or St. Mungo, the patron saint of Glasgow) may perhaps belong to the imperfect



M. xiv. Heaven has brought a heavy affliction  
On me, and I am ill at last.

G. xvii. Since thou art a companion and canon  
Of Cullaith . . . . .

M. xx. Since my reason is gone with the ghosts of the  
mountain,  
And I myself am pensive.

G. xxiv. Since Gwenddoleu was slain in the bloodshed of  
Ardderyd [Arderydd], thou art filled with dismay.

G. lxii. Myrd[d]in fair, of fame-conferring song.

life of St. Kentigern which follows it (f. 76b). This narrative has been abridged by Walter Bower (or Bowmaker), last abbot of Inchoalm (d. 1449), and inserted in his enlarged edition of the *Scotichronicon* of John Fordun, lib. iii. cap. xxxi. (see Royal 13, E. x. f. 58, and Walter Goodall's edition, of 1759, vol. i. p. 135). But Bower has omitted the pith of the story. Merlin does not receive the sacrament on the first day of meeting; but one day he comes to the "Mellodonor" (or Molen-dinar) brook, near Glasgow, demanding the sacrament, and saying that his death is at hand. He is asked three times how he will die, and each time gives a different answer. Still, St. Kentigern is at last persuaded to administer the sacrament to him. Now it has happened, once upon a time, that he was caught and bound by the petty king ("regulus") Meldredus; that he laughed at seeing the king take an apple-leaf out of his wife's hair; that he was promised freedom if he would state the cause of his laughter, and that he then told of the queen's adultery in the orchard. The queen, in revenge, ordered some shepherds to keep a look-out for him. They see him coming away from St. Kentigern, and pursue him with sticks and stones. He falls dying over a bank of the Tweed near Drumelzier, and is impaled on a salmon-stake in the water. Thus he dies by the three deaths that he has prophesied. The laugh at seeing the apple-leaf and the prophecy of the three different deaths are stories introduced into the poem; but in the poem it is not his own death that Merlin prophesies."

The prose narrative begins: "Eo quidem in tempore quo beatus kentegernus heremi deserta frequentare solebat. contigit die quadam illo in solitudinis arbusto solícite orante. vt quidam demens nudus et hirsutus et ab omni bono destitutus. quasi quidam toruum furiale transitum faceret secus eum qui lailoken vocabatur. quem quidam dicunt fuisse Merlynium." f. 74. It ends: "Porro opidum istud distat a Ciuitate Glasce quasi xxx<sup>ta</sup> miliaribus. In cuius campo lailoken tumulatus quiescit.

'Sude perrossus. lapidem perpressus. et vndam?'

Merlinus triplicem fertur inisse necem." f. 75b.

—*Catalogue of Romances*, i. p. 291.

The *Acta Sanctorum* for January tells us with regard to St. Kentigern: "De eius aetate id solum possumus statuere, vixisse seculo a Cristi nativitate sexto, circiter annum 560, nam tum S. Columba floruit, quem illius fuisse aequalem constat."—vol. i. p. 815.

G. cxii. My twin-brother, since thou hast answered me,  
Myrd[d]in, son of Morvryn the skilful,  
Sad is the tale thou hast uttered.

M. cxxii. The Creator has caused one heavy affliction :  
Dead is Morgeneu, dead is Mordav,  
Dead is Morien : I wish to die.

G. cxxiii. My only brother, chide me not ;  
Since the battle of Ardderyd [Arderydd] I am ill.

V.—*Yscolan*<sup>1</sup> is the shortest of the eight poems sometimes attributed to Myrddin, and is rejected as spurious both by Mr. Skene and M. de la Borderie, though the latter believes it to be a poem of the seventh century. But whatever its age it tells us nothing at all about Myrddin.

VI.—*Prediction of Myrddin in his tomb.*<sup>2</sup>

This is unquestionably as late as the end of the thirteenth century, and cannot be by Myrddin. In any case nothing important is to be learned from a poem which tells us merely—

“I have quaffed wine from a bright glass with the lords of  
fierce war ;

My name is Myrd[d]in, son of Morvryn.”

There remain a few fragments which call for a word of comment. In the *Book of Taliessin* (*Four Anc. Books*, i. 436) we find by an unknown writer a single allusion<sup>3</sup> to Myrddin in the poem entitled *The Omen of Prydein the Great*, “Myrd[d]in fortells these will meet, in Aber Peryddon, the stewards of the kings,” ll. 17, 18.

The poem on the Birch-trees contains nothing at all on Myrddin. It neither mentions his name nor alludes to him in any way. Skene regards it as “one of the spurious

<sup>1</sup> De la Borderie, *Les Véritables Proph. de Merlin*, p. 100, p. 108. For the translation see *Four Anc. Books*, i. p. 518. Cf. also, ii. pp. 318, 319, note.

<sup>2</sup> Called in the *Four Anc. Books*, i. 478, *A Fugitive Poem of Myrd[d]in in his Grave*. Cf. ii. p. 17 ; de la Borderie, *Les Vérit. Proph. de Merl.* p. 116.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. J. Loth, *Les Mabinogion*, ii. p. 268.

poems attributed to Myrddin which were composed in the twelfth century.<sup>1</sup> Last of all we have the poem called by de la Borderie *Les Fouissements*, which, besides being late, adds nothing to our knowledge of Myrddin.

We have now examined all of the extant Welsh literature that gives any hint as to the personality of Myrddin. We have found the record scanty at the best, and of not too convincing authenticity. Important is the fact that the supernatural element is not introduced, though it may be implied in the gift of prophecy. We here see Myrddin merely as a warrior-bard, who laments in moving words the death of his friends in battle. Our next step will take us to the Latin *Vita Merlini*, which we must compare with the Welsh poems. We shall discover a few points of likeness, but we must guard against overestimating the correspondences. Where the resemblance is not purely accidental there is scarcely enough to argue actual borrowing.

In the *Vita Merlini*<sup>2</sup> we find in the main a conception of Merlin very different from that in Geoffrey's *Historia*. This difference appears clearly in an analysis of the poem. If

<sup>1</sup> *Four Anc. Books*, ii. p. 334. Translation, i. p. 481. Cf. de la Borderie's remarks on this and other poems of its class in *Les Vérit. Proph. de Merlin*, p. 109.

<sup>2</sup> Ward (*Catal. of Romances*, i. p. 286) gives a very good summary of the contents, but he does not bring out the fact that the mad bard identifies himself (ll. 681-683) with the prophet who explained to Vortigern the combat of the two dragons. "The main action of this poem begins after the battle of Ardderyd [Arderydd]; which seems to have been fought in A.D. 573, between the great chief of the Pagans in Scotland, Gwenddolen,\* on one side, and Maelgwn Gwynedd, R[h]ydderch Hael, and Aedan son of Gafran, on the other. Gwenddolen\* was killed; R[h]ydderch established himself as King of Strathclyde, and recalled St. Kentigern from Wales to become Bishop of Glasgow; and Aedan was inaugurated King of Dalriada (Argyle and the Isles) by St. Columba. The battlefield was near two small hills, still called the Knows of Arthuret, on the western bank of the Esk, about nine miles north of Carlisle."

Cf. *The Four Ancient Books of Wales*, by W. F. Skene. Edinburgh, 1868. Vol. i. pp. 65-67. "Merlin is here described as a King of the South Welsh. Guennolous, King of Scotland, is defeated by Peredurus, the leader of the North Welsh, in conjunction with Merlin and Rodar, King of the Cambrians. Merlin, though his side wins the day, goes mad at the sight of the slaughter, and flies into the woods. He is enticed home by his wife Guendoleana, and by his sister Ganiada,

\* [Guenddolen.]

we take the facts in the life of Merlin in the order in which they are presented in the *Vita Merlini* we find that he was—

1. A king and prophet. l. 21.

2. That he

“Demetarumque superbis,  
Iura dabat populis, ducibusque futura canebat.” ll. 21, 22.

3. That in a strife between several princes,

“Venerat ad bellum Merlinus cum Pereduro. ll. 31, 32.  
Rex quoque Cumbrorum<sup>1</sup> Rodarchus.”

4. That at the sight of the slaughter,

“Hoc viso, Merline, doles, tristesque per agmen. l. 38.  
Commisceo planctus, tali quoque voce remugis.”

Merlin breaks out into lamentation.

who is married to Rodarcus. Several wild incidents follow, but finally Ganiada builds a great house in the woods for Merlin. Telgesinus (Taliessin) visits him; and they discourse together of the wonders of nature, and recall the day when they conveyed King Arthur in a boat steered by Barinthus (or Barrindeus, abbot of Druimcuillin, and a friend of St. Brandan's) to ‘Insula Pomorum’ (Avalon), where the king's wounds were tended by Morgain and her sisters.”

The Caledonian Forest, to which Merlin fled, is thus described by J. Rhys (*Celtic Britain*, p. 225): “The Caledonian Forest is found to have been located by Ptolemy where there is every reason to suppose it really was, namely, covering a tract where we are told that a thick wood of birch and hazel must once have stretched from the west of the district of Menteith, in the neighbourhood of Loch Lomond, across the country to Dunkeld. It is this vast forest that probably formed, in part at least, the boundary between the Caledonians and the Verturiones or the Brythons of Fortrenn.”

Skene (*Four Anc. Books of Wales*, i. 54) remarks: “The seventh battle [of Arthur] was ‘in silva Caledonis, id est, Cat Coit Celidon’—that is, the battle was so called, for *Cat* means a battle, and *Coed Celyddon* the Wood of Celyddon. This is the Nemus Caledonis that Merlin is said, in the Latin *Vita Merlini*, to have fled to after the battle of Ardderyth, and where, according to the tradition reported by Fordun (B. iii. ch. xxvi.), he met Kentigern, and afterwards was slain by the shepherds of Meldredus, a regulus of the country on the banks of the Tweed, ‘prope oppidum Dunmeller.’ Local tradition places the scene of it in Tweeddale, where, in the parish of Drumelzier, anciently Dunmeller, in which the name of Meldredus is preserved, is shewn the grave of Merlin. The upper part of the valley of the Tweed was once a great forest, of which the forests of Selkirk and Ettrick formed a part, and seems to have been known by the name of the *Coed Celyddon*.”

See also Skene's *Celtic Scotland*, i. p. 86.

<sup>1</sup> V. R. Cumbrorum.

5. That Peredur and his companions vainly endeavour to quiet Merlin :

“Solatur Peredurus eum, proceresque ducesque. l. 68.  
Nec vult solari nec verba precantia ferre.”

6. That after three days of weeping and fasting Merlin flees to the forests, and becomes a wild man of the woods, forgetful of himself and of his friends :

“Iam tribus emensis defleuerat ille diebus. l. 70.

Respueratque cibos ; tantus dolor usserat illum :

Inde novas furias, cum tot tantisque querelis

Aera complisset, cepit, furtimque recidit ;

Et fugit ad silvas, nec vult fugiendo videri,

Ingrediturque nemus, gaudetque latere sub ornis ;

Miraturque feras pascentes gramina saltus.

Nunc has insequitur, nunc cursu præterit illas.

Utitur herbarum radicibus ; utitur herbis ;

Utitur arboreo fructo, morisque rubeti.

Fit silvester homo, quasi silvis editus esset. l. 80.

Inde per aestatem totam ; nullique repertus,

Oblitusque sui, cognatorumque suorum,

Delituit, silvis obductus more ferino.

At cum venit [h]yems herbasque tulisset et omnes

Arboreos fructus, nec quo frueretur haberet ;

Diffudit tales miseranda voce querelas.”

7. That his complaints are heard by a passer-by who comes from the court of Rodarchus :

“Ecce viatori venit obuius alter ab aula. l. 121.

Rodarchi regis Cumbroꝝ, qui Ganiadam

Duxerat uxorem, formosa coniuge felix.

Merlini soror ista fuit, casumque dolebat

Fratris, et ad silvas et ad arva remota clientes

Miserat, ut fratrem revocarent.”

One said he had seen Merlin

“Inter dumosos saltus nemoris Calidonis.”

8. That Merlin is persuaded to return to his wife and sister :  
 "Et veniunt pariter laetantes regis in urbem. l. 214.  
 Ergo fratre suo gaudet regina recepto,  
 Proque sui reditu fit coniunx laeta mariti."
9. But that he shortly goes mad again :  
 "At postquam tantas hominum Merlinus adesse. l. 221.  
 Inspexit turmas, nec eas perferre valeret ;  
 Cepit enim furias, iterumque furore repletus  
 Ad nemus ire cupit, furtimque recedere quaerit."
10. That after a time he flees again to the woods :  
 "Et petiit silvas nullo prohibente cupitas." l. 385.  
 Some time later he is again brought to Court.
11. That one day he utters various prophecies, and adds :  
 "Haec Vortigerno cecini prolixus olim. l. 681.  
 Exponendo duum sibi mistica bella draconum  
 In ripa stagni quando consedimus hausti."
12. That he then asks his sister to send for Telgesinus to  
 come to him ; and the two wise men discourse a  
 long time together on problems of nature :  
 "Quid ventus nimbusve foret," etc. l. 734.

At l. 982, Merlin begins with the betrayal of Constans, and recounts the history of Uter and Ambrosius, Vortimer and Arthur, and the treason of Modred. The story of Ygerne is passed over in silence. This résumé of the *Historia* extends to l. 1135.

In what follows (ll. 1136–1529) we are told of the discovery of a spring, by the drinking of the water of which Merlin's reason was restored. Then follows a considerable discourse with Telegesinus, and some prophecies.

The origin of a considerable part of the *Vita Merlini* is not very difficult to trace. As Gaston Paris remarks : "The author mingles notices of geography and natural history borrowed from classical writers with popular British tales, the greater

portion of which are found elsewhere.”<sup>1</sup> Exactly how much of the material is Celtic is uncertain. There is a certain vague correspondence between parts of the *Vita* and parts of the *Aval-lenau* and the (spurious) *Hoianau*. Merlin has long conversations in the *Vita* with Telgesinus; and Myrddin engages in conversation with Taliessin in a short Welsh dialogue, probably ancient. These correspondences may not be accidental, but they are not so definite as to argue actual borrowing, to say nothing of actual translation.<sup>2</sup> Of course, Geoffrey uses names that appear in Welsh literature, as for instance, in the following passage; but these had doubtless become common literary property in his day:—

1. 26. “Dux Venedotorum Peredurus bella gerabat  
Contra Guennoloum Scotiae qui regna regebat.”

Peredur is referred to in one of the Gododin Poems of

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. Litt. de la France*, xxx. p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> San-Marte (A. Schulz) very well points out the general relations in which the *Vita Merlini* stands to Welsh literature, but he pushes his conclusions farther than most careful critics can follow him. He remarks: “Als eine besondere Eigenthümlichkeit, zumal in dieser Zeit, wo schon die französische Romanpoesie sich Merlins bemächtigt hatte, deren Kenntniss auch unserm Dichter nicht abgeht, ist jedoch hervorzuheben, dass er [der Autor] wesentlich der wälschen Tradition von Merlin Caledonius anschliesst, und eine Kenntniss der wälschen Literatur verräth, welche man bei den französischen und englisch-normannischen Dichtern sehr selten findet. Er hat indess den Stoff ziemlich frei behandelt, und die Tradition nach seiner Bequemlichkeit gestaltet. Merlin ist hier Prophet, aber auch zugleich König der nördlichen Britten. Sein Gegner ist nicht, wie bei den Barden des dreizehnten Jahrhunderts, der gegen ihn aufgehetzte Rhydderch (Rodarchus, dux Cumbro- rum) der vielmehr als Bundesgenosse auftritt, sondern Guennolous, König von Schottland, der indess in der wahren wie fabelhaften Geschichte dieses Reiches vergebens gesucht wird. Der Verlust dreier Brüder in der Schottenschlacht treibt ihn zum Wahnsinn und wilden Leben im kaledonischen Walde. Ganiada, nicht Gwenddydd, heisst seine Schwester, und Guendoloëna seine Gattin, und der mythische Gwendoll au der Barden ist verschwunden, wie auch den mitauftauchenden Taliesin nicht jener neodruidische Mysticismus desselben, sondern die Glorie klassischer Wissenschaft umschwebt, deren Quellen nachzuweisen, fast überall uns geglückt ist.”—*Die Sagen von Merlin*, p. 272.

Aneurin<sup>1</sup> (stanza 31), as "Peredur with steel arms," and he appears also in the *Mabinogion* as the hero of one of the tales.

It would be very difficult to prove that Geoffrey made extended use of any Welsh literature now extant. The following passages from the *Hoianau*, the *Avallenau*, and the *Vita* contain all the parallels I have been able to discover.

THE HOIANAU.

Stanza IX.

To us there will be years and  
long days,  
And iniquitous rulers, and the  
blasting of fruit.

Stanza XXIV.

The dales are my barn, my corn  
is not plenteous;  
My summer collection affords me  
no relief.

Stanza II.

Till Cynan<sup>2</sup> comes to it, to see its  
distress,  
Her habitations will never be  
restored.

VITA MERLINI.

Deficiunt nunc poma michi, nunc  
cetera quaeque.  
Stat sine fronde nemus, sine fructu;  
plector utroque,  
Cum neque fronde tegi valeo, neque  
fructibus uti.—ll. 95-97.

Donec als Armorico veniet temone  
Conanus  
Et Cadwalladrus Cambrorum dum<sup>3</sup>  
venerandus.—ll. 967, 968.

<sup>1</sup> Skene, *Four Anc. Books of Wales*, i. p. 386.

<sup>2</sup> Referring to the prophecy found in the *Avallenau* and the *Hoianau* of the coming of Cadwaladr and Cynan, Skene remarks (*Four Anc. Books*, i. p. 241): "In the later form of the prophecy Cynan and Cadwaladr come from Armorica. Thus, in the *Vita Merlini* Geoffrey says:—

The Britons their noble kingdom  
Shall for a long time lose through weakness,  
Until from Armorica Conan shall come in his car,  
And Cadwaladr, the honoured leader of the Cymry.

And the prophecy can only have assumed this shape after the fictitious narrative of Cadwaladr taking refuge in Armorica was substituted for his death in the pestilence, and the scene of his return is placed in South Wales, whence this form of prophecy emerged." Mr. Phillimore suggests that Cadwaladr is preferably Cadwaladr.

<sup>3</sup> For *dux*.



THE AVALLENAU.<sup>1</sup>

## VITA MERLINI.

## I.

Sweet apple-tree of delightful branches,	Tres quater et iuges septenae poma ferentes
Budding luxuriantly, and shoot- ing forth renowned scions.	Hic steterant mali; nunc non stant. <sup>2</sup> —ll. 90, 91.

I will predict before the owner of Machreu,  
That in the valley of Machawy<sup>3</sup> on Wednesday there will be  
blood,—

Joy to Lloegyr of the blood-red blades.

Hear, O little pig! there will come on Thursday

Joy to the Cymry of mighty battles,

In their defence of Cymminawd, with their incessant sword-  
thrusts.

On the Saxons there will be a slaughter with ashen spears,  
And their heads will be used as balls to play with.

I prophesy truth without disguise,—

The elevation of a child in a secluded part of the South.

## II.

Sweet apple-tree, a green tree of luxurious growth,

How large are its branches, and beautiful its form!

And I will predict a battle that will make me shriek

At Pengwern, in the sovereign feast, mead is appropriate.

## III.

Sweet apple-tree, and yellow tree,

Grow at Tal Ardd, without a garden surrounding it;

<sup>1</sup> *Black Book of Caermarthen*, xvii. Skene, *Four Ancient Books of Wales*, i. pp. 370-373.

<sup>2</sup> San-Marte, in commenting on l. 90 of the *Vita Merlini*, remarks: "*Tres quater*. Die Zahl stimmt zwar nicht mit *Avalleuau* i.; doch ist die Beziehung darauf klar, und die Kenntniss jenes Gedichts beim Autor sicher vorauszusetzen."—*Die Sagen von Merlin*, p. 316. Doubtless most readers would like to feel as sure as San-Marte.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Phillimore states: "The vale of the Machawy (now spelt 'Bachowey') is in S. Radnorshire. A great battle was fought there near Pain's Castle, toward the end of the twelfth century, and three thousand men were killed. See Giraldus Cambrensis' works for this slaughter."

And I will predict a battle in Prydyn,  
In defence of their frontier against the men of Dublin ;  
Seven ships will come over the wide lake,  
And seven hundred over the sea to conquer.  
Of those that come, none will go to Cennyn,  
Except seven half-empty ones, according to the prediction.

## IV.

Sweet apple-tree that luxuriantly grows !  
Food I used to take at its base to please a fair maid,  
When, with my shield on my shoulder, and my sword on my  
thigh,  
I slept all alone in the wood of Celyddon.  
Hear, O little pig ; now apply thyself to reason,  
And listen to birds whose notes are pleasant :  
Sovereigns across the sea will come on Monday ;  
Blessed will the Cymry be, from that design.

## V.

Sweet apple-tree that grows in the glade !  
Their vehemence will conceal it from the lords of R[h]ydderch ;  
Trodden it is around its base, and men are about it.  
Terrible to them were heroic forms :  
Gwenddyd[d] loves me not, greets me not ;  
I am hated by the firmest minister of R[h]ydderch ;  
I have ruined his son and his daughter.  
Death takes all away, why does he not visit me ?  
For after Gwenddoleu no princes honour me ;  
I am not soothed with diversion, I am not visited by the fair ;  
Yet in the battle of Ardderyd [Ardderydd] golden was my  
torques,  
Though I am now despised by her who is of the colour of  
swans.

## VI.

Sweet apple-tree of delicate bloom,  
That grows in concealment in the woods !

At break of day the tale was told me,  
 That the firmest minister is offended at my creed,  
 Twice, thrice, four times, in one day.  
 O Jesus! would that my end had come  
 Before the death of the son of Gwend[d]ydd happen on my hand!

## VII.

Sweet apple-tree, which grows by the river side!  
 With respect to it, the keeper will not thrive on its splendid  
 fruit.  
 While my reason was not aberrant, I used to be around its  
 stem  
 With a fair sportive maid, a paragon of slender form.

## THE AVALLENAU.

## VITA MERLINI.

Ten years and forty, as the toy of  
 lawless ones,  
 Have I been wandering in gloom  
 and among sprites.  
 After wealth in abundance and  
 entertaining minstrels  
 I have been (here so long that) it  
 is useless for gloom and sprites  
 to lead me astray.

Et fugit ad silvas, nec vult  
 fugiendo videri,  
 Ingrediturque nemus, gaudetque  
 latere sub ornis;  
 Miraturque feras pascentes gra-  
 mina saltus.  
 Nunc has insequitur, nunc cursu  
 praeterit illas.  
 Utitur herbarum radicibus; utitur  
 herbis;  
 Utitur arboreo fructu, morisque  
 rubeti,  
 Fit silvester homo, quasi silvis  
 editus esset,  
 Inde per aestatem totam; nulli-  
 que repertus,  
 Oblitusque sui, cognatorumque  
 suorum,  
 Delituit, silvis obductus more  
 ferino.—ll. 74-83.

I will not sleep, but tremble on account of my leader,  
 My lord Gwenddoleu, and those who are natives of my country.  
 After suffering disease and longing grief about the words<sup>1</sup> of  
 Celyddon,  
 May I become a blessed servant of the Sovereign of splendid  
 retinues!

## VIII.

Sweet apple-tree of delicate blossoms, which grows in the  
 soil amid the trees!  
 The Sibyl foretells a tale that will come to pass—  
 A golden rod of great value, will, for bravery,  
 Be given to glorious chiefs before the dragons;  
 The diffuser of grace will vanquish the profane man;  
 Before the child, bold as the sun in his courses,  
 Saxons shall be eradicated, and bards shall flourish.

## IX.

## THE AVALLENAU.

## VITA MERLINI.

Sweet apple-tree, and a tree of  
 crimson hue,  
 Which grow in concealment in the  
 wood of Celyddon;  
 Though sought for their fruit, it  
 will be in vain,  
 Until Cadwaladyr comes from the  
 conference of Cadvaon,  
 To the Eagle of Tywi and Teiwi  
 rivers;  
 And until fierce anguish comes  
 from Aranwynion,  
 And the wild and long-haired  
 ones are made tame.

Donec ab Armorico veniet temone  
 Conanus<sup>2</sup>  
 Et Cadwalladrus Cambrorum dum<sup>3</sup>  
 venerandus.—ll. 967, 968.

<sup>1</sup> But the original has *coed keliton*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. "Cadwalladrus vocabit Conanum, et Albaniam in societatem accipiet."  
 —Geoff. of Monmouth, *Prophecy of Merlin*, l. 92.

<sup>3</sup> For *dux*.

THE AVALLENAU.

X.

VITA MERLINI.

Sweet apple-tree, and a tree of  
crimson hue,  
Which grow in concealment in  
the wood of Celyddon;  
Though sought for their fruit, it  
will be in vain,  
Until Cadwaladry comes from the  
conference of Rhyd Rheon,  
And Cynan to meet him advances  
upon the Saxons;  
The Cymry will be victorious,  
glorious will be their leader.  
All shall have their rights, and  
the Brython will rejoice,  
Sounding the horns of gladness,  
and chanting the song of peace  
and happiness!

"Non," Merlinus ait, "non sic  
gens illa recedet,  
Ut semel in nostris ungues in-  
fixerit ortis:  
Regnum namque prius populosque  
ingabit et urbes,  
Viribus atque suis multis domina-  
bitur annis.  
Tres tamen ex nostris magna vir-  
tute resistent,  
Et multos periment, et eos in fine  
domabunt:  
Sed non perficient,<sup>1</sup> quia sic sen-  
tentia summi  
Iudicis existit, Britones ut nobile  
regnum  
Temporibus multis amittant de-  
bilitate,  
Donec ab Armorico veniet temone  
Conanus,<sup>2</sup>  
Et Cadwalladrus Cambrorum dum<sup>3</sup>  
venerandus;  
Qui pariter Scotos, Cumbros, et  
Cornubienses,  
Armoricosque viros sociabunt foe-  
dere firmo;  
Amissumque suis reddent diadema  
colonis,  
Hostibus expulsis, renovato tem-  
pore Bruti,  
Tractabuntque suas sacratis legi-  
bus urbes.  
Incipient reges iterum superare  
remotos,  
Et sua regna sibi certamine sub-  
dere forti." 4—ll. 958-975.

<sup>1</sup> V.R. proficient.  
*Artussage*, p. 92.

<sup>2</sup> V.R. Conais.

<sup>3</sup> For *duz*.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. San-Marte, *Die*

With very trifling exceptions this is the entire extent of Geoffrey's indebtedness in the *Vita* to such of the Welsh literature as has come down to us. At best it would be difficult to prove from the correspondences between these Welsh poems and the *Vita* that Geoffrey had ever seen them.<sup>1</sup> Surely we may admit that some of the Welsh poems refer to the battle of Arderydd, and that the *Vita Merlini* does the same, without being compelled to assume that the *Vita* is based upon them. From a variety of considerations we may conclude that a considerable part of the *Vita* is in the last analysis Celtic, but further than this we can hardly go. The Welsh poems that we have may be mere fragmentary representatives of a large body of Welsh literature now irretrievably lost, but perhaps still in existence in the time of Geoffrey. It is possible, if not certain, that Geoffrey had access to a considerable mass of floating unwritten tradition based, it may be, in part on old poems that have long since perished. Probably none of these poems were directly employed in the composition of the *Vita Merlini*; but a set of parallel traditions, based in part on the same events referred to in the Welsh poems, may have formed the groundwork of those portions of the Latin poem which tell of Merlin's madness and of his discourse with Taliessin.

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## VI.

### THE TRANSITION TO FRENCH LITERATURE.

HAVING now taken a general survey of the Latin and Celtic sources that are extant, and that can therefore be directly examined, we are prepared to see how the legend passed into the literature of France, and thence into the other literatures of Western Europe. But before entering upon this question

<sup>1</sup> Cf. on this matter P. Paris, *Romans de la Table Ronde*, i. p. 45.

we ought to glance at what M. Gaston Paris calls the *matière de Bretagne*.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately we cannot trace the growth of the legend in Armorica. The Breton literature, considerable of which doubtless existed at an early period, has not been preserved except in the form of early French<sup>2</sup> and Icelandic translations, and none of these relate in any way to Merlin. The existence of a large body of unwritten tradition, which kept a precarious existence on the lips of *jongleurs* and harpers,<sup>3</sup> is not open to question. But to what extent the popular imagination modified the original material can, in the absence of literary documents, be only a field for conjecture. But while we are unable to trace directly the Armorican literature in its various forms, we have from a variety of sources evidence of the existence of Breton *lais*, in which perhaps the germ of many of the later French romances is to be sought. Without question there existed both in greater and lesser Britain before Geoffrey of Monmouth wrote his *Historia*, and perhaps before *Nennius* composed his little chronicle, a considerable body of songs embodying popular legends.<sup>4</sup> Some of these recitals undoubtedly found their way into Geoffrey's *Historia*. It is probable, too, that the publication of his book and of the numerous translations brought to light a great number of songs or *lais*, as well as prose legends which had been known only in obscure corners or had at most been sung and related by wandering harpers in passing from castle to

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. Litt. de la France*, xxx. p. 14. By *Bretagne* he means Great Britain : cf. *Romania*, xii. p. 373 ; and p. 82, *ante*.

<sup>2</sup> Such, for example, as the *Lais* of Marie de France.

<sup>3</sup> The existence of British harpers is attested by a number of the classical writers, as, for example, Athenæus, Cæsar, Strabo, Lucan, Ausonius, Fortunatus, etc., who thus show that the wandering gleemen of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were not a new creation. Cf. P. Paris, *Romans de la Table Ronde*, i. p. 7.

<sup>4</sup> "Rien ne saurait scientifiquement nous empêcher de croire à l'antériorité des chants bretons sur la chronique de Nennius, chants dont un certain nombre sont si profondément celtique."—*Les Épopées françaises*, L. Gautier. Quoted by Hucher, *Saint-Graal*, i. 2. Cf. also P. Paris, *Romans de la Table Ronde*, i. p. 47.

castle. As soon as the *Historia* crystallized some of this material into literary form, the example once set was followed by a great variety of versifiers and prose-writers, whose activity extended through several generations. A part, at least, of these songs may have related to Arthur and the Round Table as well as to his Court, and they would naturally penetrate into the courtly circles which alone could substantially reward the singer. The stories embodied in these songs must have passed from lip to lip in the form of prose tales, and, once introduced into the quick-witted French and Norman society, the progress of assimilation must have been rapid.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The details of the process are unknown, and have naturally led to conflicting views. M. Gaston Paris expresses himself as follows:—"En effet, en dehors du monde des clercs, dans lequel Gaufré de Monmouth avait introduit, en l'arrangeant à sa mode la légende arthurienne, elle avait pénétré, sous des formes variées et par des canaux divers, dans la société chevaleresque. Dès devant la conquête de l'Angleterre par les Normands, les musiciens gallois avaient, semble-t-il, franchi les limites de leur patrie pour venir exécuter chez les Anglo-Saxons eux-mêmes ces 'lais' qui depuis eurent un si grand charme pour le public français. C'est ainsi du moins qu'on peut expliquer que Marie de France désigne le sujet de deux de ses lais à la fois par un mot breton et un mot anglais (*bisclavret*, *garwall*; *laustic*, *nihtegale*), celui d'un autre seulement par un mot anglais (*gotelef*), et que le breuvage amoureux qui causa la passion de Tristan et d'Iseut porte, dans le poème de Bérout, le nom anglais de *lovendris* (les traits particuliers que le prêtre anglais Layamon, dans sa traduction du *Brut* de Wace, ajoute à la légende d'Arthur s'expliquent peut-être autrement). Mais ce fut surtout chez les nouveaux maîtres d'Angleterre que les chanteurs et musiciens bretons trouvèrent un accueil empressé; ils ne tardèrent même pas à passer la mer, et de nombreux témoignages, qui ne dépassent guère la fin du xii<sup>e</sup> siècle, nous les montrent à cette époque exécutant avec grand succès leurs lais dans toutes les grandes ou petites cours de la France du Nord. Ces 'lais bretons' étaient des morceaux de musique accompagnés de paroles; la musique, la 'note,' comme on disait, y jouait le rôle principal; toutefois les paroles avaient leur importance, et les auditeurs qui ne comprenaient pas le breton éprouvèrent naturellement le besoin de savoir ce qu'elles voulaient dire. Elles se référaient toujours, mais peut-être sans la raconter précisément, à quelque histoire d'amour et généralement de malheur. On mit ces histoires en vers français, et nous avons ainsi conservé une assez riche collection de lais bretons, que n'ont plus rien de musical, et qui sont tous composés en vers de huit syllabes rimant deux par deux. Un seul est en vers de six syllabes. . . . Mais la plupart des lais sont réellement fondés sur des contes celtiques. D'ordinaire, les aventures qu'ils racontent ne reçoivent aucune détermination de temps ou de lieu. . . . Les lais ne furent pas les seuls véhicules par lesquels les fictions celtiques pénétrèrent en masse au xii<sup>e</sup> siècle, dans la société polie d'Angleterre et de France, et y suscitèrent une poésie nouvelle. Déjà les vers de



The oft-quoted passage from the *Chanson des Saisnes* shows

Wace cités plus haut nous ont montré à l'œuvre les conteurs et les 'fableurs' brochant à qui mieux sur le fond des aventures de la Table ronde."—*Hist. Litt. de la France*, xxx. pp. 7-9.

The case against the theory proposed by M. Gaston Paris is stated<sup>a</sup> "by Prof. Foerster in the introduction to his recently published edition of Chrétien's *Erec*, and at greater length by Prof. Zimmer.<sup>b</sup> Without going into details, let it suffice to say, that, on the negative side, the latter challenges the production of any evidence to show, that Welsh bards or minstrels used to sing to the Saxons in England before the Norman Conquest, or even after that event to either Normans or Saxons at a time early enough for the purpose of M. Paris' argument. He contends that the term 'lais bretons' and 'la matière de Bretagne' had nothing to do with Wales, but everything with the Bretons and Brittany. Then as to the lays and the romances, and the suggestion that the latter are derived from the former, he denies it, partly because neither he nor Foerster knows of any lays which can be said to have been originally Arthurian; partly also—and this brings us to the positive side of Zimmer's contention—because he is convinced that the romances were based on stories in prose rather than in verse. He even goes so far as to call attention to what he considers an ancient and far-reaching distinction between Celts and Teutons, namely, that while the Teutonic way of dealing with the heroic was to express it in the form of an epic poem, the Celtic ideal was that of an epic story in prose. To suit the Norman the Celtic originals had not only to be translated into his language, but also transformed into the epic form of his predilection. The versification was his own business, or that of his French neighbours; but the translation was quite a different matter, belonging to an antecedent stage, and this is believed by Zimmer to have been gradually done, in the first instance, by the Bretons of the eastern portion of Brittany when they gave up their own Brythonic speech to adopt Norman French in its stead, and when their nobles became dependent on Normandy.

Accordingly Dr. Zimmer lays great emphasis on the difference between the Arthur of the romances, whom he tries to trace to Breton sources, and the Welsh Arthur whom Nennius, for instance, mentions hunting the *Porcus Troit*. This, however, does not go quite far enough, as the rôle he assigns to the Normanized Bretons of east Brittany does not exclude the Welsh from playing a similar rôle with regard to the Normans later, namely, after the advent of the latter into Wales: witness the case of the Welshman Bledri. The twofold Brythonic origin of the romances makes itself perceptible in a way which the readers of these chapters may have already noticed, especially in the matter of proper names. Looked at from our point of view, the latter divide themselves into two groups:—1. Well-known names like Gauvain and Modred, the forms of which do not admit of being explained as the result of misreading or miscopying of Welsh originals: they may be the French forms which the Normanizing Bretons gave them—without the direct intervention of scribes or literary men of any kind—when they adopted French as their language.

<sup>a</sup> I borrow for convenience the summary of the argument from the *Studies in the Arthurian Legend* (pp. 374-376) by Prof. Rhys.

<sup>b</sup> In *Gött. gelehrte Anzeigen* for 1890, pp. 488-528, pp. 785-832; and *Zeitschrift für französische Sprache und Litteratur*, xii. pp. 231-256.

what a hold this material had already got upon the writers of romance :—

“ Ne sont que trois maters a nul home entendant  
De France, de Bretagne, et de Rome la grant ;  
Et de ces trois maters ni a nul semblant  
Li conte de Bretagne sont et vain et plaisant.”<sup>1</sup>

At the outset this material, in the opinion of Gaston Paris, came from England, and thence was carried into France, either directly by the British singers and story-tellers, or by means of Anglo-Norman story-tellers ; or already put into verse in the lays and the Anglo-Norman poems.”<sup>2</sup> But the part played by Armorican Britain must not be overlooked. A more or less lively intercourse was kept up between Armorica<sup>3</sup> and Great Britain, and it is quite probable that the Arthurian and Merlin legends were almost as well known in Armorica as

2. Names like Gonomans, Bron, and Palomydes, together with place-names like Aroie, which readily admit of being explained from Welsh originals : these mostly belong to the romances more or less closely connected with the story of the Holy Grail, which itself we have endeavoured to trace to Welsh sources. This opens up a new and difficult question, which may be confidently left to future research.”

For the sake of comparison I add the following passage from Kreyssig's *Gesch. der franz. Lit.* i. pp. 78, 79 :—“ Einen ganz andern Character als die *chansons de geste* tragen die nunmehr zu betrachtenden *romans*. In ihnen haben wir das Resultat der Berührung der französischen Normannen und der englischen Kelten zu sehen ; von diesen haben sie die Vorliebe für das Wunderbare, Übersinnliche, Geheimnisvolle, Mystische, den Glauben an Riesen, Zwerge, Feen, Zauberer, Drachen ; von jenen den chevaleresken Zug, die keine Gefahr scheuende Tapferkeit, die Betonung des Motivs der Liebe, der in den Heldengedichten nur spärlich Raum gelassen ist. In ihnen ist der ritterliche Geist zur vollsten Entwicklung gelangt, und es ist wohl angezeigt sein Wesen in kurzen Zügen darzustellen, da die Kenntniss desselben zum Verständniss der sein Gepräge tragenden Litteraturproducte unumgänglich notwendig ist.”

<sup>1</sup> Cf. P. Paris, *Romans de la Table Ronde*, i. p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> G. Paris, *Hist. Litt. de la France*, xxx. p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> “ Une autre source de transmission des légendes bretonnes a été la Bretagne armoricaine. Sans parler de la communauté d'origine et des incessantes relations des émigrés bretons avec l'île mère, notamment avec la Cornouaille anglaise, il y avait eu une nouvelle émigration de Bretons armoricains en Angleterre au commencement du dixième siècle, émigration considérable, mais, qui, pour beaucoup des émigrants, ne fut pas définitive.”—J. Loth, *Les Mabinogion*, i. p. 16.

in the heart of Wales itself. At any rate, it is hardly open to question that these British chants and tales are older<sup>1</sup> than any of the French romances in prose or verse<sup>2</sup>; and we may suppose that, while the French romances were growing up on all sides, these British tales were diffused in France and England "under the double form of the *lai* and the story," from the "first half of the twelfth century till toward the middle of the thirteenth."<sup>3</sup>

Wace recognized the existence of this material in speaking of the Round Table, which Geoffrey of Monmouth had not mentioned, and significantly adds that of this the Britons tell many a fable. He had doubtless an independent acquaintance with Breton legends; for he mentions in the *Roman de Rou* the wonderful fountain of Broceliande, and says that he has visited the spot without discovering any marvels.

We may, then, grant at once that Geoffrey of Monmouth was not the originator of the material of the French romances,<sup>4</sup> but we may suppose that his work gave the necessary impetus for the literary development of the legends he had told. His popularity is evidenced by several translations<sup>5</sup> of his *Historia* into French verse. The first by Geoffrey Gaimar (1145) has disappeared without leaving an enduring trace. But in 1155, about a decade after Geoffrey of Monmouth had given the final touches to his *Historia*, Wace<sup>6</sup> translated the whole into

<sup>1</sup> Cf. P. Paris, *Romans de la Table Ronde*, i. p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> On the general subject of the Breton *lais* see *Hist. Litt. de la France*, xviii. p. 773; xix. p. 712; xix. p. 791; xxiii. p. 61; xxiii. p. 76; xxiii. p. 114; xxviii. p. 375; xxviii. p. 385; xxix. p. 498; xxx. pp. 7-12; *Romania*, vii. p. 1; *Romania*, viii. p. 29.—*Strengleikar* (Icelandic version), pp. 57, 67, 82.

<sup>3</sup> *Hist. Litt. de la France*, xxx. p. 12.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. G. Paris, *Hist. Litt. de la France*, xxx.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. the list in the enumeration of the French forms of the legend, p. 37, *ante*.

<sup>6</sup> The peculiar difficulty attending this whole investigation is well illustrated by such a series of misstatements as is found in a single sentence from the *Encyc. Brit.* (ix<sup>e</sup> ed.), art. *Geoffrey of Monmouth*: "Geoffrey's *Historia* was the basis of a host of other works. It was abridged by Alfred of Beverley (1150), and translated into

octosyllabic rhyming verse, and opened to those writers who had but a slender acquaintance with Latin an orderly grouping of materials that were capable of indefinite expansion.

In so far as Merlin is concerned, Wace is little more than a translator of Geoffrey. The diffuseness of the translator in his versified descriptions of feasts and battles entitles him to no great credit for inventiveness; and his only real addition<sup>1</sup> is his account of the establishment of the Round Table.<sup>2</sup> This, however, belongs more to the history of Arthur than to that of Merlin.

Wace's *Roman de Brut* was put into French prose shortly after its appearance,<sup>3</sup> and then recopied, imitated, and translated so frequently that the versions in English as well as in French have not yet been properly edited. Up to the last quarter of the twelfth century no French writer seems to have ventured to make independent use of the materials for romance that lay scattered in such profusion. But after Wace's *Brut* had made this material familiar to French writers the period of production began. Our limits make it impossible for us to do more than to follow closely the origin of the prose romance of Merlin.

For the purposes of our examination we may note that the prose *Merlin* divides itself into two very unequal parts. The first part comprises about one-seventh of the whole, and represents what was in all probability the original romance of *Merlin*.<sup>4</sup> The second part deals more particularly with King

Anglo-Norman verse by Geoffrey Gaimar (1154), and then by Wace (1180), whose work, *Li Romans de Brut*, contained a good deal of new matter." The few facts that we have of the life of Wace are found for the most part in the autobiographic hints that he gives in the *Roman de Rou*, ll. 5315-5329; 10440-10453; 16526-16537.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Ten Brink, *Gesch. der engl. Lit.* i. p. 177. Ward, *Catal. of Romances*, i. p. 261.

<sup>2</sup> L. 9998. The account of Merlin is practically closed at l. 9022, where Merlin, Ulfín, and the King resume their real persons after the visit to Ygerne. Wace's account of Merlin begins about l. 7490, where Vortigern's tower is mentioned.

<sup>3</sup> Villemarqué, *Les Romans de la Table Ronde*, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> This matter is fully treated in the discussion of the MSS.

Arthur. The first part ends with the coronation of Arthur. This event the romancers took as a point of departure for a number of versions widely differing in character. Our English translation is based on the continuation most in vogue. For convenience, therefore, we may first deal with the original romance, and then make a more detailed survey of the continuations. We can then best treat the question of the authorship of the latter portion of the romance.

The original French romance of *Merlin* was in verse, and was probably written as early as the last decade of the twelfth century, if not earlier. The *Merlin*, as already noted, was intended to serve as a connecting link<sup>1</sup> between two other poems, *Joseph d'Arimathie* and *Perceval*. Of these poems we have the first entire<sup>2</sup>; of the second, we have a fragment of 504 lines; of the third,<sup>3</sup> we have nothing in verse, but we possess a fourteenth-century prose version much altered, in a unique manuscript of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris.<sup>4</sup> The poem of *Merlin* was early reduced to prose,<sup>5</sup> and then furnished the incidents of the short romance of *Merlin*. M. Gaston Paris,<sup>6</sup> following Birch-Hirschfeld, thinks that the prose *Perceval* published by Hucher<sup>7</sup> is based upon a poem by Robert de Borron. The conclusion is reasonably certain, though we know nothing of the prose-writer.

The few known facts of Robert's life have been brought

<sup>1</sup> G. Paris, *Merlin*, Introd. p. ix.

<sup>2</sup> Ll. 1-3514.

<sup>3</sup> Nutt, *Holy Grail*, chap. ii., gives a summary of all three, but the summary of the *Merlin* on p. 64 D is not taken from the poem (which in the extant fragment does not contain all the matter summarized), but from the prose romance.

<sup>4</sup> No. 4166, Nouv. acq. fr.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. P. Paris, *Romans de la Table Ronde*, i. p. 355. The MS. of the poem of the *Joseph* and the *Merlin* is unique (Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 20,047), and small enough to be carried in the pocket. The only published edition is that of F. Michel, Bordeaux, 1841.

<sup>6</sup> *Merlin*, Introd. i. p. ix.

<sup>7</sup> *Le Saint-Graal*, i. pp. 415-505.

together in an attempted chronological sequence ;<sup>1</sup> but of his personal history, the date of his birth, the circumstances in which he wrote, his relations to the other writers of his time, the extent of his education, and the opportunities he had for becoming acquainted with the legends which he reproduced in verse—of all this we can say very little that is certain.<sup>2</sup> He mentions in his poem (ll. 3488–3494)—

“ Mon seigneur Gautier in peis,  
Qui de Mont Belyal estoit,”

and tells us that from Gautier he had learned the story of the Graal. The meaning of these lines has been variously interpreted ; but the most probable explanation is that which takes the words *en peis* and *estoit* to refer to the decease of Gautier (Walter) in 1212. This was thirteen years after he had left France for Italy and the Holy Land, where he had been made Constable of Jerusalem. Robert de Borron had been in Walter's service sometime between 1170 (?) and 1190, and perhaps during the entire period. In these years<sup>3</sup> he wrote the first draft of his poem ; and the second draft, in all probability, after Walter's death in 1212. This second draft is the one that we possess.

Now follows an obscure period in which the exact sequence of events cannot be traced. But in any case, though we

<sup>1</sup> Cf. P. Paris, *Romans de la Table Ronde* ; G. Paris, *Merlin*, i. Introd. ; Hucher, *Le Saint-Graal*, i. Introd. ; Nutt, *Studies on the Legend of the Holy Grail*, Index ii. Mr. Nutt gives, on the whole, the most coherent account.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Romania*, x. p. 601. His name is variously written (cf. Nutt's *Studies*, p. 5) : “ Messires Roberz de Beron ” (*Joseph d'Arimathie*, l. 3461) ; “ Meistres Robers dist de Bouron ” (l. 3155). The prose romance writes “ Roberz de Borron,” “ de Boron,” etc. M. Gaston Paris writes “ Robert de Boron.”

<sup>3</sup> Nutt, *Studies*, pp. 6, 7. Ten Brink, *Gesch. der engl. Lit.* i. p. 215, supposes Robert to have written in the sixties of the twelfth century. As a curiosity of literary history, we may note that San-Marte regarded Robert de Borron as a thirteenth-century adapter of earlier prose versions of the *Saint-Graal*. Cf. Nutt, *Studies*, p. 99.

cannot fix the precise year in which each production took shape, we may believe that in the course of two generations or less after Robert de Borron began to write, the most important of the prose romances were, if not already written, at least in their main outlines, already conceived.<sup>1</sup> None of these romances can be said to have been finished at any particular time; for in most cases each new copyist felt at liberty to substitute something of his own for whatever was not exactly to his liking.

As already remarked, the prose romance of *Merlin* is a more or less faithful reproduction of the poem of Robert de Borron. As a specimen, I have placed the beginning and the end of the *Merlin* fragment side by side with the French prose and the English prose.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Nutt, *Studies*, p. 6.

ROBERT DE BOBBON'S MERLIN.

B.N. MS. fr. 20,047.

f. 55b, l. 7.

l. 3515.

Mout fu li Ennemis courciez  
Quant Enfer fu ainsi brisie; z  
Car Jhesus de mort suscita,  
En Enfer uint et le brisa.  
Adam et Eue en ha gité  
Ki là furent en grant uinité;  
O lui emmena ses amis  
Lassus ou ciel, en Paradis.  
Quant Deable ce aperçurent,  
Ausi cum tout enragié furent.

l. 3525.

Mout durement se merveillierent  
Et pour ce tout s'atropelerent,  
Et disoient: "Qui est cist hon  
Qui ha teu uertu et tel non?  
Car nos fermetez ha brisies,

FRENCH PROSE.

B.N. MS. fr. 105, f. 126.

Moult fu li annemis ires quant  
*nostre* sires ot este en enfer et il en  
ot iete<sup>1</sup> adam et eue et tant des  
autres comme a lui plot.<sup>2</sup> Quant li  
Anemi virent ce si en orient moult  
grant enuie.<sup>3</sup> Si sassamblèrent et  
distrent.<sup>4</sup> Qui est cils hom qui<sup>5</sup> si  
nous a enforciez que fermetez ne  
riens que<sup>6</sup> nous euissons ne puet  
estre contre lui gardeé quil ne<sup>7</sup> feist  
ce que lui pleut.<sup>8</sup> Nous ne euidions  
pas que nuls homs deust<sup>9</sup> naistre  
(f. 126b) de femme quil ne fust  
*nostre* et si nous destruit ainsi.  
Comment est il nez quant<sup>10</sup> il n'a  
nul delit domme ne riens ensi comme  
nous auons eu dautre homme.

ENGLISH PROSE.

p. 1, ll. 1-11.

FvH wrothe and angry was the  
DeueH, whan that oure lorde hadde  
ben in helle, and had take oute Adam  
and Eve, and other<sup>e</sup> at his plesiere;  
and whan the fendes sien that, they  
hadden right grete feere and gret  
merveille; thei assembleden to-gedire  
and seiden: "What is he this thus  
vs supprisiH and distroyeth, in so



Les portes d'Enfer depecies :  
 Riens n'auoit force encontre lui,  
 Ne de par nous ne par autrui ;  
 Car il feit tout quanque lui pleit,  
 Pour nului son uoloir ne leit.

l. 3535.

Ceci au meins bien cuidions  
 Qu'en terre ne uenist nus hons  
 Qui de cors de femme nachist,  
 De no pouoir fuir pouist ;  
 Et cist ainsi nous ha destruit,  
 Qu'il Enfer ha leissié tout uuit.  
 Comment puet estre d'omme nez  
 Ne concéuz ne engenrez  
 Que delit éu n'i auuns  
 Si cum en autre auoir soluns ?”

I add a collation of the more important readings of B.N. MSS. fr. 747, f. 77, col. 2 (A), and 24,394, f. 108 (B).

<sup>1</sup> Gite (A) ; gete (B).

<sup>2</sup> tant com li plot (A) ; tant com il li plot (B).

<sup>3</sup> mervelle (A) ; poor et ml't grant meruelle (B).

<sup>4</sup> dirent (A). "

<sup>5</sup> qui nos a eforciez car en nos permeter rien (A) ; qui si nosorpuet (B).

<sup>6</sup> qui fust repost *je raie* contre lin *parce que plus loin cela manque dans* (A).

<sup>7</sup> nen face (A) ; contrestre q'el nen flist (B).

<sup>8</sup> plaist (A) ; plot (B).

<sup>9</sup> poist (A) ; peust (B).

<sup>10</sup> que nosni auons coneu nul delit de nul home terrien, ainsi com nos auons ueu *et seu de toz autres homes* (A) ; que nos nauons veu en lui nul delit *terrien ensi com nos auons veu de tos autres hommes* (B).

moche that oure strengthes ne nought  
 ellis that we haue may nought with-  
 holde hym, nor again hym stonde in  
 no diffence ; but that he doth all  
 that him lyketh, we ne trowed not  
 that eny man might be bore of  
 woman, but that he sholde ben  
 oures ; and he that thus vs dis-  
 troyeth, how is he born in whom  
 we knewe non erthely delyte.”

ROBERT DE BORRON'S MERLIN.

l. 3991.

La uielle dist : "ma douce suer,  
 Vous estes bien gitée puer.  
 La uostre grant biauté mar fu,  
 Qu'ainsi auez trestout perdu;  
 Car iamais ioie en uostre uie  
 N'arez en ceste compeignie.  
 Meis se uous sentu auiez  
 La ioie as autres, et sauiez  
 Qués deduiz autres femmes unt.

l. 4000.

Quant aueques leur amis sunt,  
 Certes, ne priseriez mie  
 Vostre eise une pomme pourrie;  
 Se saviez quele eise auuns  
 Quant aueques nos amis suns,

# FRENCH PROSE.

B.N. MS. fr. 105, f. 128, col. 1.  
 ll. 12-38.

Diex bele amie se uous sauiez  
 comme grant ioie<sup>1</sup> autres femmes  
 ont, *vous* ne priseriez riens quanqu<sup>2</sup>  
 vous auez. Nous auons tele ioie  
 tant comme nous sommes en com-  
 paignie d'ommes que nous amons que  
 se nous nauions que vne aumonne<sup>2</sup>  
 de pain si serions nous plus aise que  
 nous nestes que se nous auions<sup>3</sup> quan-

<sup>1</sup> MS. 24,394, f. 109<sup>b</sup>, col. 1, la ioie.

<sup>2</sup> aumosne.

<sup>3</sup> nos auies.

# ENGLISH PROSE.

p. 6, ll. 21-29.

"Now, feire love," quod she,  
 "yef ye knewe what ioie other  
 wemen haue, ye sholde preyse litil  
 alle othir thynges; for we haue  
 oche ioie when we be in companys  
 of men that we loven, that yef we  
 hadde but a mosse<sup>1</sup> brede, we haue  
 more ioie and delyte than ye haue  
 with alle the delicatys of the worlde.

Car nous sommes en compaignie  
Que nous amuns; c'est boenne uie.  
Vn peu de pein mieuz ameroie,  
Se delez mon ami estoie,  
Que ne feroie uos richesses

L. 4010.

Que gardez à si granz destresces.  
N'est si granz eise, ce me semble,  
Comme d'omme et de femme en-  
semble.

Bele amie pour toi le di;  
Car dou tout as à ce failli,  
Et si te direi bien pour quoi;  
Ta suer est ainz née de toi  
Et pour li se pourchacera,  
[S]i qu'ençois de toi en aura.

. . . . .  
. . . . .

quil a en cest pays.<sup>1</sup> Que uant dont  
ioie de femme qui na ioie domme?  
Bele amie ie le di pour uous que ia  
point nen auerez ne ne saurez que  
ioie domme sera. Si uous dirai pour  
quoi vostre suer si est aisnee de vous  
si en aura auant a son oez que<sup>2</sup> ele  
sueffre ne ne veille que uous en aiez.  
Et quant ele en aura si ne li chandra  
de vous. Ainsi auez uous perdue la  
ioie de uostre bel cors qui tant marg fu.

<sup>1</sup> siecle Die que uant.

<sup>2</sup> vos en aies point.

Fye! what ioye hath a woman with-  
oute man? Ffeire love, this I seye  
for yow that knowen not what it is  
to be in mannes company, and I will  
telle you why: youre suster is elder  
than ye, and so she wolde alwey  
holde yow as her sogect, so that she  
myght haue aH, and so shold ye loose  
your tyme, and the ioye of youre  
feire body."

feire body."

Ta suer est ainz née de toi  
Et pour li se pourchacera,

[S]i qu'ençois de toi en aura.

A comparison of the three parallel texts shows how closely and yet with what considerable variations the prose adapter has handled his original. It is, however, by no means certain that we have the earliest French prose version of the poem, and we can therefore make allowances for a second paraphrase based, it may be, upon the first one. As for the English version, it is based upon a French text differing slightly from those texts that have come down to us.

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## VII.

### THE FRENCH MANUSCRIPTS OF THE PROSE MERLIN.

IN the following list I have arranged in chronological order all of the manuscripts of the French prose *Merlin*<sup>1</sup> that are mentioned in the numerous catalogues I have consulted. After grouping the manuscripts according to age, I have endeavoured to point out in detail some of the relations existing among the more important ones. The generic grouping is always a perilous task; and I shall not insist too strongly upon the family resemblances that I find. I need hardly add that I make no pretence to an absolutely exact chronological arrangement, though in the main it will be found, I think, that the older manuscript has the earlier place. Until we have established such a chronology, and know how many hands retouched the original work, we can, of course, scarcely hope to understand precisely the relations of one version to another. We should, however, not forget that a late manuscript may represent a very

<sup>1</sup> One might be led to think from Dr. Sommer's remarks on p. 7 of his *Studies on the Sources of Malory's Morte d'Arthur* that we have but three or four MSS. of the *Merlin ordinaire*. I hardly understand what he means (p. 14) where he speaks of "all MSS. and editions presenting the same version." He cites for the *Merlin* only the Huth MS., Brit. Mus. Add. 10,292, and Harl. 6340, though he had already mentioned MS. 747 of the Bibl. Nat. (p. 7).

early copy now lost, and thus give a more primitive version (though in modernized phraseology) than a manuscript actually older. The original version seems to have been lost,<sup>1</sup> and it can be tentatively reconstructed only by laborious critical comparison. There now exist the following French manuscripts of the prose *Romance of Merlin*. Some of these represent only the first part (ch. i.-vi.), some only the second part (ch. vii.-xxxiii.), and some are mere fragments.<sup>2</sup>

- 1.\* Paris, Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 337, Anc. No. 6958, xiii. cent. Incomplete at the beginning and the end. Contains only the *Book of Arthur*, and after f. 115, col. 1, l. 28, presents a unique version, differing entirely from all the other texts.<sup>3</sup>
- 2.\* Paris, Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 747, Anc. No. 7170, xiii. cent. Contains prose romance of *Joseph*, or the *Saint-Graal*, and the *Merlin*, complete.<sup>4</sup>
3. Paris, Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 748, Anc. No. 7170, Fonds de Cangé, No. 4, middle of xiii. cent. Contains *Roman de Joseph ou du Saint-Graal*,<sup>5</sup> and the first part of the *Romance of Merlin*. Incomplete at the end. Parallels the English version with some variations up to the words, "On witson even be comen coun-[seile of all the barons]," p. 106, l. 31. For our purpose this

<sup>1</sup> There is a bare possibility that B.N. MS. fr. 337 may be the original version of the *Book of Arthur*, but this is not at all certain.

<sup>2</sup> The \* indicates that the manuscript is more fully discussed further on.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. G. Paris, *Introd. to Merlin*, i. p. xxiv. note. An edition of this MS. is to be published by the *Société des Anciens Textes*. This version is interesting, too, in that it mentions "maistre Gautiers mape" (f. 152, col. 2), and tells us that he had translated the book from Latin into French at the request of King Henry, who richly rewarded him. *Credat Judæus!*

<sup>4</sup> "La leçon est bonne et des plus complètes."—P. Paris, *Les MSS. Franç.* vii. p. 1. "Le plus ancien et le meilleur, si nous ne nous trompons, de ceux qui nous ont conservé ce texte."—G. Paris, *Introd. to Merlin*, p. viii. G. P. here refers specifically to the *Merlin* based on Robert de Borron's poem.

<sup>5</sup> P. Paris, *MSS. Franç.* vi. p. 2, observes that this is a "Volume fort précieux en ce qu'il contient le même récit en prose que M. Francisque Michel a publié en vers d'après le Manuscrit de Saint-Germain, No. 1987. Le texte en prose paraît unique comme le texte en vers. Le roman de Merlin commence au f. 18 r. Il diffère peu des leçons ordinaires, et n'est continué que jusqu'au couronnement d'Artus."

manuscript is of no especial importance, as it belongs to the group of manuscripts which differ so widely (f. 28*b*, col. 2) from the English version at one point (p. 23).

4. Paris, Bib. de l'Arsenal, MS. fr. 2996, Anc. No. 225 B.F., xiii. cent. Contains *Le Petit Saint-Graal ou Joseph d'Arimatee* and the first branch of *Merlin*. Very badly defaced at the end. Last page almost illegible. The legible portion parallels the English version up to p. 105. This manuscript presents the ordinary readings of the MSS., and varies (f. 25*b*—f. 26, col. 1), as do so many of the other MSS., from the English version at p. 23. It may be classed with Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 748 (No. 3 of our list).<sup>1</sup>
5. Paris, Bib. de l'Arsenal, MS. fr. 2997, Anc. No. 229 B.F., xiii. cent. Contains the first branch of the *Romanse of Merlin*, followed by the *Petit Saint-Graal*.<sup>2</sup> This manuscript calls for no special remark. Some pages are hardly legible, but the readings in general are not peculiar. The French parallels the English up to the end of Chapter vi. p. 107, but like Bib. Nat. MS. 748 it differs (f. 8) from the English version at p. 23 (*cf.* No. 3 of our list). At the end of the *Saint-Graal* Merlin is called *Mellin*.
- 6.\* Paris, Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 344, Anc. No. 6965, middle of xiii. cent.<sup>3</sup> Contains *Saint-Graal*, *Merlin*, *Lancelot*, *La Quête du Saint-Graal*.<sup>4</sup> As far as f. 182, col. 2, l. 36, the French parallels the English version (p. 521, l. 31); then rapidly condenses the remainder of the story, and ends with f. 184, col. 1, l. 26. The first column on the page is filled up with a miniature, and two lines of the *Lancelot*. The second column begins with a miniature and the two opening lines, which are repeated from the first column.
7. Paris, Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 2455, xiii. cent. Contains *Saint-Graal* (ff. 1-338) and a very short fragment of the beginning of the prose *Merlin*, nine long lines and four and a half short ones.
- 8.\* Paris, Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 770, Anc. No. 7185,<sup>3a</sup> Fonds de Cangé, No. 6, middle of xiii. century. Contains *Saint-Graal*, *Merlin*

<sup>1</sup> For a further description see *Cat. des MSS.* (Bibl. de l'Arsenal) iii. p. 186.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* iii. p. 186.

<sup>3</sup> *Cf.* Hucher, *Le Saint-Graal*, i. p. 23.

<sup>4</sup> *Cf.* P. Paris, *MSS. Franç.* ii. p. 365.

complete, *Chronique de la Conquête de Jérusalem par Saladin*.<sup>1</sup> This version closely resembles that of Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 95 (No. 9 of this list), but may perhaps be older.

- 9.\* Paris, Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 95, Anc. No. 6769, xiii. cent. Contains *Saint-Graal*, *Merlin* complete, *Roman des Sept Sages*, *Légende de la Pénitence d'Adam*.<sup>2</sup>
- 10.\* Paris, Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 24,394, Notre Dame, No. 206,<sup>3</sup> xiii. cent. Contains *Saint-Graal* and *Merlin* complete.
- 11.\* Paris, Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 110, Anc. No. 6782.<sup>4</sup> End of xiii. cent.<sup>5</sup> Contains *Saint-Graal*, *Merlin* complete, *Lancelot*.
- 12.\* Paris, Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 749, Anc. No. 7171, Fontainableau No. 733, etc. End of xiii. cent. Contains *Roman de Joseph ou du Saint-Graal*, *Merlin* complete. Paulin Paris remarks<sup>6</sup> that this text is good, and contains several episodes of the *Merlin* not found in all the old manuscripts. The last nine *laissez* of the *Merlin*, are lost.
13. Paris, Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 423, Anc. No. 7024, Anc. Bib. Mazarin No. 116, Morceau No. 14. End of xiii. cent. Paulin Paris calls this a "curious abridgement of the romances of the *Saint-Graal* and of *Merlin*. The last leaves are wanting."<sup>7</sup> There is no formal division between the *Petit Saint-Graal* and the *Merlin*, except that a new paragraph is begun. The French parallels the English up to the middle of p. 23, but at this point differs by giving the version which says that "when the two books are put together they will be *.i. bel liure*."
- 14.\* Paris, Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 19,162, S.G. fr. 1245, xiii.-xiv. cent. Contains *Saint-Graal* and *Merlin* complete.
15. London, Huth MS.<sup>8</sup> End of xiii. or beginning of xiv. cent. Contains the prose *Joseph d'Arimathie*, the prose *Merlin*

<sup>1</sup> Cf. P. Paris, *MSS. Franç.* vii. 130, 131.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* i. 120.

<sup>3</sup> Mentioned by P. Paris, *Romans de la Table Ronde*, ii. 352.

<sup>4</sup> Described by P. Paris, *MSS. Franç.* i. 145.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Hucher, *Le Saint-Graal*, i. 23.

<sup>6</sup> *MSS. Franç.* vi. 3.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* iv. 65-67.

<sup>8</sup> Fully described by G. Paris, *Introd. to Merlin*, i. pp. i.-viii.

(Eng. chap. i.-vi.), and a unique continuation of the *Merlin*. This version agrees less closely with the English version than several of the other French texts do.

- 16.\* Paris, Bib. Nat. Nouv. acq. fr. 4166. Written 1301 A.D. Contains *Joseph d'Armathie*, the first branch of *Merlin* (Eng. chap. i.-vi.), and a unique continuation of the *Merlin*, known as the prose *Perceval*, which has been published by Hucher.<sup>1</sup>
17. Rennes, Bib. publique, MS. 147.<sup>2</sup> Copy begun 1302-1303 A.D.
- 18.\* Paris, Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 105, Anc. No. 6777. End of xiii. or beginning of xiv. cent.<sup>3</sup> Contains *Joseph d'Armathie* and *Merlin* complete.
- 19.\* Paris, Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 9123, suppl. fr. 11. xiv. cent. Contains *Joseph d'Armathie* and *Merlin*. This manuscript, though later and somewhat better preserved, is almost exactly like MS. fr. 105 in its readings. The two MSS. agree in having rubrics as headings for the chapters, a feature not found in many of the MSS. of *Merlin*. These two MSS. seem on the whole to represent more nearly than any of the others the French original of the English romances. The details of the proof will be found in the subsequent discussion.
- 20.\* London, Brit. Mus. MS. Add. 10,292. Early xiv. cent. Contains *Saint-Graal*, *Merlin*,<sup>4</sup> complete. This MS. may be classed with Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 24,394, Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 96, and Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 19,162.<sup>5</sup> Of course this general agreement does not preclude minor differences due to the caprice or negligence of the copyist.
- 21.\* Paris, Bib. de l'Arsenal, No. 3482, B.F. 235, xiv. cent. Contains *Merlin* (both branches), *Lancelot*, *la Queste du Saint-Graal*, *la Mort du Roi Artus*. Several leaves are missing: the whole

<sup>1</sup> *Le Saint-Graal*, i. pp. 415-505.

<sup>2</sup> F. Michel, *Vita Merlini*, p. lxxi., gives the number as 148. See also *Description, Notices et Extraits des MSS. de la Bibl. de Rennes* par Dominique Maillet, Rennes, 1837, 8vo., pp. 133, 134. This MS. and the late Brussels MS. are the only ones that I have not examined.

<sup>3</sup> P. Paris, *MSS. Franç.* i. 140, 141; Hucher, *Saint-Graal*, i. 21.

<sup>4</sup> Described in Ward's *Cat. of MSS.* i. 343. Cf. Sommer's note, *Morte Darthur*, iii. 7.

<sup>5</sup> Nos. 10, 14, 24, of this list.



- of *cahiers* xv. and xvi.; in *cahier* viii. two leaves; in ix. two leaves; in xii. one leaf; in xviii. one leaf; in xx. one leaf; in xxii. two leaves; in xxiii. one leaf; in xxv. two leaves.<sup>1</sup>
22. Paris, Bib. Nat. Coté dons, No. 1638. Don de M. Piot.<sup>2</sup> xiv. cent. Fragment of the romance of *Merlin* in eight leaves, numbered 25-32. The French represents accurately the English version from Eng. p. 59, l. 22, to p. 81, l. 28. With one exception the paragraphs begin at the same point in the French and the English, and in that case there is a variation of but a single line.
- 23.\* Paris, Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 98, Anc. No. 6772. xiv. cent. Contains *Saint-Graal*, *Merlin*, complete, *Lancelot*.<sup>3</sup>
- 24.\* Paris, Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 96, Anc. No. 6770. End of xiv. cent. Contains *Saint-Graal*, *Merlin*, complete, first part of *Lancelot*. Agrees closely with Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 24,394 (No. 10 of this list), but the language has been modernized in the copying.<sup>4</sup>
- 25.\* Paris, Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 117-120, Anc. No. 6788-6791. End of xiv. cent.<sup>5</sup> Contains *Saint-Graal*, *Merlin*, *Lancelot*. The *Merlin* is found in No. 117, and is very complete.
26. Brussels, Bib. Royale MS. fr. 9246, 1480 A.D. Contains *Joseph d'Armathie* and *La Vie de Merlin*.<sup>6</sup>
27. Paris, Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 113, Anc. No. 6784. End of xv. cent. Contains *Saint-Graal*; the first branch of *Merlin*, representing the first six chapters of the English version; *Lancelot*. The French text is abridged, modernized, and otherwise altered.<sup>7</sup>
28. London, Brit. Mus. Harl. 6340, xv. cent. paper MS. Contains *Merlin*, complete. The version is considerably modernized, and according to Ward<sup>8</sup> is written at greater detail than the text of the printed edition (2 vols. Paris, 1498), but containing the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Cat. des MSS. Bib. de l'Arsenal*, iii. pp. 382, 383.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Romania*, 1878, vii. p. 157.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. P. Paris, *MSS. Franç.* i. p. 129.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, i. p. 125, p. 127.

<sup>5</sup> Hucher, *Le Saint-Graal*, i. 23, assigns this MS. to the xiv. or xv. century. Cf. P. Paris, *MSS. Franç.* i. 154-156.

<sup>6</sup> This MS. I have not seen; but as it was transcribed twenty or thirty years after our translation was made, I imagine that my loss is not great.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. P. Paris, *MSS. Franç.* i. 152-154.

<sup>8</sup> *Cat. of Romances*, i. 344.

same adventures, only with two additional chapters, viz. that of the dwarf knight and that of the birth of Lancelot.<sup>1</sup> Besides being too late to have been used as the basis of our translation, this manuscript is a copy of a version which omits numerous passages contained in the English translation as well as in several of the French MS. Such omissions may be verified by comparing E. p. 176 with Fr. f. 83, col. 1; E. p. 179 with f. 83b, col. 1; E. p. 187, l. 8–l. 18 with f. 85b, col. 2; E. p. 189 with f. 86, col. 1, etc. The test passage, f. 21b, col. 2 and f. 22, col. 1, differs from the English, p. 23, in giving the expanded version and in omitting to mention “Maister Martins.”<sup>2</sup>

29. Paris, Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 332, Anc. No. 6954. Beginning of xvi. cent. Contains *Merlin*, complete. The language is modernized so as to represent the speech of the xv. century.<sup>3</sup> Besides being too late for our purpose, the minor variations from the English version exclude this version from being regarded as the original. It differs from the English in giving the expanded version for Eng. p. 23, and in making no mention of “Maister Martins.” Other differences may be found by comparing E. p. 485 with f. 223, col. 2; E. pp. 576–578 with f. 261b–f. 262, etc.

#### THE MERLIN A COMPOSITE ROMANCE.

At this point, before venturing on a further classification, we can most conveniently consider the facts which indicate that the *Romance of Merlin* as we have it is a composite of several romances.

<sup>1</sup> On this Sommer (*Morte Darthur*, vol. iii. p. 7) remarks “The fact is that both texts [Harl. and Add. 10,292] are exactly alike, representing only different stages of the French language; both, therefore, contain more than the printed [French] *Merlin*.”

<sup>2</sup> This MS. may be compared with Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 24,394.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. P. Paris, *MSS. Franç.* ii. 340. To the MSS. noticed above I may add three MSS. mentioned in the *Romania* for 1873, vol. ii. pp. 51, 53, 55 as existing in the Este collection (in Italy) of the fifteenth century.

(1) “6(20). Libro uno in francexe, chiamato Merlino,—in carta membrana, coerto de chore roso.”

(2) “43 Libro uno chiamato Merlino—in membrana, coerto de chore roso—in francexe.”

(3) “Liber Merlini—in membranis.”

In the year 1868, about a third of a century after the publication of his first work on the Arthurian romances, Paulin Paris expressed the opinion<sup>1</sup> that the romance of *Merlin* was made up of at least two principal parts by different writers, the first part<sup>2</sup> extending to the coronation of Arthur; the second, comprising the remainder of the romance. At first sight the division appears somewhat arbitrary, but closer study makes it extremely probable.<sup>3</sup> At any rate, the scepticism with which I was disposed at the outset to regard the theory has almost entirely vanished. As the details of his argument are but little known to English readers, I will venture to reproduce concisely what is to be urged in favour of his view. Paulin Paris presented his arguments in several different forms at different times, but they may be reduced to the following:—

1.—At the close of the original romance of *Merlin*<sup>4</sup> we are told that Arthur after his coronation held the land and the kingdom for a long time in peace. But in the romance as we have it the rebellion against Arthur follows immediately after. It is hardly probable that a writer would so contradict himself in the course of a few lines.

2.—At the end of the poem of *Joseph d'Arimathie* Robert de Borron had promised to take up the adventures of Alain le Gros when he had read the large book of the *Graal* where they are related. Now, in one of the manuscripts of *Merlin*,<sup>5</sup> after telling of the coronation of Arthur, the author says he is going to tell of Alain, and when done with him to return to Arthur. This promise is not kept in any version which has come down to us; and these closing lines are omitted in all the other

<sup>1</sup> In *Les Romans de la Table Ronde*, i. p. 356 sq.; ii. pp. 101–103, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Chapters i.–vi. of the English version.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. also Kölbing, *Altenglische Bibl.* iv. p. cxxviii.

<sup>4</sup> P. 107 of the English translation.

<sup>5</sup> Bib. Nat. MS. fr. No. 747, f. 102, back. The other MSS. containing both branches of the romance make no formal break at this point, though in most cases they begin a new paragraph.

manuscripts. They are evidently the prose equivalents of the concluding verses of the poem of Merlin. All the versions pass at once to the rebellion of the barons who disdained the young king.

From these and other data Paulin Paris concludes : 1. That Robert de Borron had nothing to do with the Book of the *Saint-Graal*, written at the very same time when he composed *Joseph d'Arimathie* ; 2. that after becoming acquainted with the *Graal* he intended to continue the history of Alain le Gros, if not of Bron and Petrus ; 3. that the writers who came after Robert de Borron, finding the story of Alain fully told in the *Graal*, set aside Robert's poetic version (assuming that it really existed) and substituted for it the history of Arthur,<sup>1</sup> which they harmonized as well as they could with the *Merlin*.

M. Paris finds additional confirmation for his theory in the numerous contradictions between the first portion of the romance and the second :—

1.—In the original romance the Duke of Tintagel<sup>2</sup> left several daughters, the eldest of whom married Loth, King of Orkanie, while another daughter, the illegitimate Morgain, was put to school. In the continuation we find that Ygerne had been twice married before espousing Uter-Pendragon. Of this double marriage were born five daughters : the Queen of Orcanie, wife of Loth ; the Queen of Garlot, wife of Nautre (Ventres)<sup>3</sup> ; the Queen of Wales (Gorre), wife of Urien ; the Queen of Scotland, widow of Briadan, and mother of King Aguisel (Aguysas) ; finally, the wise Morgain, surnamed *le fee*.

2.—In the short romance of Robert de Borron, Merlin had made a golden dragon as a standard just after the battle of

<sup>1</sup> Paulin Paris uniformly refers to the *Livre d'Artus*, or shortly, the *Artus*.

<sup>2</sup> Strangely enough we find in the second part (Eng. p. 177) the name of "Duke Hoel of Tintagel" given as the husband of Ygerne. This is not found in the first part. Geoffrey of Monmouth has, of course, *Gorlois*.

<sup>3</sup> I need not remark that the forms of the names are so various in the MSS. that no two writers on the Arthurian romances are quite agreed as to which forms to adopt.

Salisbury, won by the brothers Pendragon and Uter. In the continuation Merlin makes the dragon for Arthur (Eng. p. 115) instead of for his father. This argument is, however, not very convincing, as there is no reason why Merlin may not have made two dragons as well as one.

3.—According to Robert de Borron, Kay was made steward or seneschal at the time when Arthur took the sword out of the stone (Eng. p. 104). In the continuation, observes Paulin Paris, it is at the moment of attacking the six rebel kings that Arthur confides to Kay, his foster-brother, the office of seneschal (Eng. p. 116).

I must confess that as the two passages appear in the English I can see no real contradiction at this point. The English reads as follows:—

“And be counseile of the archebisschop and certein of the barouns, Kay was made stiwarde,” p. 104.

“Than toke the kynge the dragon and yaf it to Kay, his stiwarde, in soche forwarde that he be chef baner of the reame of logres euer while his lif doth dure,” p. 116.

4.—Paulin Paris instances<sup>1</sup> also the confusion introduced by the Round Table of Leodegan, and observes that the continuator of Robert de Borron's narrative was content to follow the ancient lays without regard to the contradictions.

We may then, argues Paulin Paris, regard it as well established<sup>2</sup> that we have in the large romance of *Merlin* at least two romances. The first ends at the coronation of Arthur, and represents the original poem of Robert de Borron—a poem written to link the poem of *Joseph d'Arimathie* with the (lost) poem of *Perceval*. To this original romance were added several continuations, one of which became more popular than the others,

<sup>1</sup> *Romans de la Table Ronde*, ii. pp. 126, 127.

<sup>2</sup> For a continuation of these arguments, see the remarks by Gaston Paris in the Introduction to the *Merlin* published for the *Soc. des Anc. Textes*, 1886.

and furnished the text for the early printed editions. In the following pages I will sketch briefly these different versions.

It is not impossible that other continuations of the romance existed that have not been preserved. Those that we have are found in the following manuscripts:—

1. Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 337 (list No. 1).
2. Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 344 (list No. 6).
3. Bib. Nat. Nouv. acq. fr. 4166 (list No. 16).
4. Huth MS., London (list No. 15).
5. Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 98 (list No. 23).

The continuation known as the vulgate, or the *Merlin ordinaire*, appears in a considerable number of manuscripts which exhibit only minor variations. The reason for treating any of these versions separately is one of convenience only.

1. *Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 337.*

On this manuscript Paulin Paris remarks that it is the one which before all others should be consulted by those who would well understand the history of the Enchanter Merlin.<sup>1</sup> The volume has lost the original beginning and the end, and begins, “with the court that King Arthur holds immediately after his coronation,” and “ends with the combat of Gawein with Oriol, king of the Saxons.” For a considerable distance this version runs parallel with the ordinary version, and in many cases agrees almost word for word with it. But this text (MS. 337), after describing the amour of Guyomar with Morgain le fee, breaks off abruptly (f. 115, col. 1, l. 28), and returns to speak of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. The ordinary French text<sup>2</sup> (represented by the English version p. 509) introduces at this point King Loth and his sons as starting

<sup>1</sup> *MSS. Franç.* ii. p. 343. He gives a short analysis of the special features of this version in *Romans de la Table Ronde*, ii. p. 393 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 747, f. 186, col. 1.

out on their mission to the feudatory princes. The entire remainder of the narrative in MS. 337 and in the vulgate is essentially different, though here and there is a passage which points to a common source. In the unique portion (of MS. 337) which follows the point of divergence, the wars with the Saxons, and the personal adventures of Seigramor, of Yvain, of King Arthur, and especially of Gawein, are dwelt upon at great length, and with an infinity of detail. There are, however, four hundred pages (pp. 108-508) of the English version that contain essentially the same narrative as appears in the first 115 leaves of this manuscript. It is true that the minor variations are such as to preclude the possibility of this version having been actually used by the English translator; for there are numberless differences in forms of names, in numerals, in omitted sentences, and added phrases.<sup>1</sup> Yet multitudes of passages are almost literally coincident, and show clearly that all the versions, in so far as they agree at all, were copied with mere individual variations from one original. This manuscript is one of the very earliest of those that have been preserved to us, though it may in turn have been based upon a version still earlier.

If now we take up the later unique portion of the romance, and add it to the portion which agrees with the vulgate, we have a romance far exceeding in length any of the existing versions.<sup>2</sup> We cannot go into the details of this unique French version, but must be content to note a few of the more

<sup>1</sup> Cf. for instance, the list of knights, f. 29, col. 2, with that of the English version, p. 212; the description of Gonnore, f. 33b, with that on p. 227 of the English version; f. 107b, col. 1, with English, p. 485. These are by no means the most divergent of the passages that might be cited.

<sup>2</sup> In the entire MS. are 294 leaves or 588 pages ( $14\frac{1}{2} \times 10\frac{3}{4}$  in.) of two columns each, which would be equal to about 1030 pages of our English translation. If we were to add the first branch of the *Merlin*, we should have, say, 1130 pages, and still have an unfinished romance! The unique portion is equal in amount to about 625 pages of the English translation: that is, it lacks only about 75 pages of being as long as the entire English version.

remarkable passages. In reading the ordinary *Merlin* and the *Book of Arthur*, the attentive reader remarks several passages in which the writer promises to explain something more fully later in the narrative. For instance, after describing the amour of Guyomar with Morgain le fee, the writer adds (p. 509)—“But after it knewe the quene Gonnore, as ye shull here tell.” In the ordinary version there is no further reference to the matter. But in MS. 337, f. 187, col. 2, the narrator returns to the adventure as he hād promised (f. 114*b*, col. 2) and describes the visit of Merlin to Morgain le fee after her disappearance from the court, and tells how he comforts her. Now, on p. 508 of the English translation, we read of Morgain le fee that “she was a noble clergesse, and of Astronomye cowde she I-nough, for Merlin hadde hir taught; and after he lerned hir I-nough, as ye shull heren afterward.” But we do not “heren afterward,” except in the unique French version of MS. 337, in which we find that he teaches her many things, and she in turn almost makes the enchanter prefer her to Nimiane his love.

On p. 527 of the English translation (that is, in the portion not represented in this unique French version) we read of the reproof that king Loth gives Agravain for his impure thinking, and then we find a passing reference to an unpleasant accident which befell the young man, “as the booke shall yow devyse here-after.” In all the subsequent story, however, we discover no further reference to the matter; while MS. 337, f. 255, col. 1, gives the story in full, though with some variation. For instance, in the English version (p. 527) we read “that he langwissid longe a-boue the erthe for the vilonye that he dide to a mayden, that rode with hir frende, with whom he faught till that he hadde hym discounfited and *maymed of oon of his armes*.” The French has (f. 255) “il li trenchast la teste.”

The inference from these facts is obvious: Whoever under-



took to write the later portion of the romance of *Merlin* worked over an older version, and was too careless to notice the inconsistencies and contradictions of one part of his narrative with another. This older version may have been that of MS. 337,<sup>1</sup> from which the later writer borrowed now and then a hint. Paulin Paris sees in this special version evidence that it was composed earlier than the *Lancelot*.<sup>2</sup> This suggestion, however, raises a question that may safely be left till we have the promised edition of MS. 337.

To determine exactly the influence that this special version had upon the composition of the last third of the *Book of Arthur*, is not easy without a printed text. But, as already noted, the

<sup>1</sup> *Romans de la Table Ronde*, ii. p. 397.

<sup>2</sup> Compare the remarks of Gaston Paris (Intro. to *Merlin*, p. xxiv.) on the priority of the *Lancelot* over the *Book of Arthur*. I cannot discuss the question, but I shall be surprised if critical comparison of the texts when they are published will altogether justify G. Paris. I note merely a few of the passages in the *Merlin* and the *Lancelot* where the two romances refer to the same incidents:—

1.—The birth of Merlin is recounted in the *Lancelot*, part i., chapter vi.: “Cœ merlin fut ègèdre du dyable. Et cœ il fut amoureux de la dame du lac” (ed. of 1488), but with difference enough, as P. Paris remarks,<sup>a</sup> to show that the *Merlin* and the *Lancelot* are not by the same author.

2.—The death of Lancelot is referred to in an interpolated passage<sup>b</sup> of the *Merlin* (p. 147).

3.—The trouble that Guyomar caused the realm of Logres, “as the tale shaft rehearse here-after,” is referred to in the *Merlin* (pp. 316, 317).

4.—The marvels that Guynebans performs for a maiden (*Merlin*, p. 361 sqq.) are paralleled in the *Lancelot*.<sup>c</sup>

5.—The origin of Morgain’s hate for the queen (*Merlin*, pp. 508, 509) is explained in the *Lancelot*.<sup>d</sup>

6.—The adventure of Agravain and his cure (*Merlin*, p. 527) are touched upon in the *Lancelot*.<sup>e</sup>

7.—The adventure of Ban at the castle of Agravadain (*Merlin*, ch. xxx) is paralleled in the *Lancelot*.<sup>f</sup>

8.—The loss of the castle of Trebes (*Merlin*, p. 699) is described at the beginning of the *Lancelot*.

An incident not found in the *Merlin* is referred to in the *Lancelot*. Reference is there made to the *Perron Merlin*, “where Merlin had killed the two enchanterers.” *Ibid.* iii. 287.

<sup>a</sup> Cf. B. N. MS. 24,394, f. 149b, col. 2.    <sup>b</sup> *Romans*, iii. 23.    <sup>c</sup> *Ibid.* v. 311.

<sup>d</sup> *Ibid.* iv. 292, 293.    <sup>e</sup> *Ibid.* iii. 326–332; iv. 47 (cf. B. N. MS. 337, f. 255).

<sup>f</sup> *Ibid.* v. 309, 324–325.

later writer seems to have taken a hint here and there. For instance, a sort of variant of the adventure of king Ban at the castle of the Lord of the Marsh (Eng. chap. xxx.) is found at f. 184*b*, with the difference that in this French version the niece plays the leading part instead of the daughter, and that the setting of the two incidents is not the same. To inquire particularly into the motives for the rejection of so much of this old version would lead us too far. If the reason lay in the salacious quality of many of the incidents, one might ask why the adventure of Guyomar and Morgain le fee should have been retained, especially as it is apropos of nothing, and occurs at the very point where the ordinary version begins to differ from this one. But taken as a whole the ordinary version is not so highly seasoned with realistic love adventures as the version it replaced, which is an almost continuous catalogue of lechery. A more plausible explanation, perhaps, is that after the old version had been written, the *Lancelot* appeared and some writer conceived the plan of recasting the *Merlin* as an introduction to the *Lancelot*. There are some difficulties in this view, but M. Gaston Paris regards it as probable.<sup>1</sup> Whatever our view of the relative age of the two versions, the one which the sense of the Middle Ages fixed upon as preferable seems, in spite of incoherency and needless details, to possess more connection and to move forward more definitely toward the end than this crude and formless congeries of adventures.

## 2. *Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 344.*

The only peculiarity worthy of special attention in this manuscript is that after f. 182, col. 2, l. 36, the story is suddenly compressed into a few pages, so that the end is reached on

<sup>1</sup> This may well be true of that part of the *Merlin* between pp. 509 and 699; but as for the part between pp. 107 and 509 there may be more doubt. The interpolations are numerous, and they need critical handling with the help of a critical text before the question can be settled.

f. 184, col. 1.<sup>1</sup> This fact would of itself be sufficient to exclude this manuscript from being regarded as the possible original of the English translation, even though we took no account of minor differences. Yet these smaller differences are considerable, in spite of frequent verbal agreement. For instance, the important passage f. 85*b*, col. 2.; Eng. p. 23, is much longer in the French than in the English; nor is this contraction due to the English translator, for we find the same in MS. 105. Exceedingly interesting is it, however, to find mentioned at this point “maistre Martins,” whose name does not appear in most of the texts, though it is found in the English translation:—

“*Et ki voudroit nomeir les rois qui deuant i furent et lor uie uoldroit oir, si gardaist en lestoire de bretaine que len apelle brutus, ke maistre martins de rouain retrait de latin en romans.*”

In the English version (p. 23) the reader is referred to a book on the history of the Britons that “maister martyne traunslated out of latyn.” As most of the manuscripts omit this name, its

<sup>1</sup> The corresponding portion in the English version extends from p. 521, l. 31, to p. 699. Comparing the two versions, we find the parallel almost complete as far as f. 182, col. 2, l. 36; Eng. p. 521, l. 31, when Elizer, son of King Pelles, sets out accompanied by a squire. But in place of the long series of adventures related in our version we have a short account of his proceeding directly to Carlion, where Arthur and his Queen, King Ban, and King Bohors receive him with honour, and tell him of the embassy of Loth and his sons to the princes. While they are talking, the news comes to Ban and Bohors that King Claudas is ravaging their country. They at once take their departure, and without stopping go to their own country (“*et san vont droit au lor terres,*” f. 182*b*, col. 1). All this is, of course, a wide variation from the English version. Then the story turns again to King Loth and his four sons. The King gets Minoras the forester to send messengers to the princes, and then goes his way, meets the princes and secures their promise of help. After this he returns to Arthur at Camelot, where Elizer is knighted. The princes come to help Arthur against the Saxons, and succeed in defeating them before the City of Clarence, after which they kneel before Arthur and ask pardon for their rebellion. He forgives them, and they become his men. Here the tale ends, f. 184, col. 1.

This short version I incline to regard as a condensation rather than an earlier and less diffuse narrative, though I find it not easy to see why some incidents should be passed over while others are retained. A possible reason for the abridgment is that the copyist wished to save parchment for the *Lancelot* and the *Quête du Saint-Graal* which follow.

presence here would seem to indicate that this manuscript stands in somewhat closer relations than do the other manuscripts to the family of manuscripts on which our English translation is based. The long passage with regard to the Saint-Graal in this manuscript may have been condensed into a form like that from which the English passage was translated, or possibly the shorter version may be the original; but this seems hardly probable, as the longer version is found in Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 747, which is perhaps the oldest text of the first portion of the romance.<sup>1</sup>

As in the case of so many other manuscripts, the verbal differences alone are sufficient to compel the rejection of this version as the actual working original of the English translation. For instance, in the list of knights (E. p. 212; French, f. 122, cols. 1 and 2) we have such differences as: "And the forthe was Antor"—"et li quars ector ces alvouez"; "the ix<sup>e</sup> was Gifflet"—"li.ix. li fiz do de carduel." Conclusive also is the variation in the French passage quoted in the English version (p. 485) and what we find here (f. 175, col. 1, l. 6).

"*Et li heraut comansent a crier, et cil crioz darmes per-mi ces rans. 'or i paurait qui bien lon ferait. or iert veus qui bien lon ferait.'*"

### 3. *Bib. Nat. Nouv. acq. fr. 4166.*

This unique manuscript is of peculiar interest, as it supplies a missing link in the history of the French Arthurian romances. It contains the prose romance of *Joseph of Arimathea*, the romance of *Merlin* up to the coronation of Arthur, and the romance of *Perceval*,<sup>2</sup> which exists only in this prose version. Gaston Paris regards these three romances as prose versions of the three poems of Robert de Borron.<sup>3</sup> This conclusion is reasonably certain as regards the first two, and not improbable

<sup>1</sup> Cf. G. Paris, *Introd. to Merlin*, p. viii.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Romania*, viii. p. 478.

<sup>3</sup> *Introd. to Merlin*, i. p. ix.

as regards the last, but perhaps we have not sufficient evidence for a final judgment. The *Merlin* does not differ widely from the ordinary texts, though the verbal differences are often considerable. The manuscript is beautifully executed, but it would have excited comparatively little attention, were it not for the unique *Perceval*, which adds one more continuation to the *Merlin*.<sup>1</sup>

#### 4. *Huth MS.*, London.<sup>2</sup>

This manuscript, like the one just noticed, contains a unique continuation of the original romance of *Merlin*. The point of divergence is the coronation of Arthur. In the opinion of Gaston Paris this version, "like the ordinary continuation of the *Merlin*," was made "for the purpose of connecting the *Merlin* of Robert de Borron with the *Lancelot* and other compositions."<sup>3</sup> The principal interest that it possesses for us is that it contains the original of a portion of Malory's *Morte Darthur*.<sup>4</sup>

#### 5. *Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 98.*

This, perhaps, hardly deserves to rank as a special version. The entire manuscript contains the *Saint-Graal*, *Merlin*, *Lancelot*, and along with the *Merlin* the so-called *Prophecies*, singularly dovetailed into the ordinary text of the long romance. Variations from the English version are scattered throughout the text. On f. 138*b*, col. 2, the longer version,<sup>5</sup> with no mention of "maister Martyn," is given instead of that found in the English text, p. 23. The list of knights (f. 173, col. 2, and f. 173*b*) agrees more closely with the list in the translation

<sup>1</sup> The *Perceval* has been published by Hucher in *Le Saint-Graal*, i. pp. 415-505; see an analysis in Nutt's *Studies on the Legend of the Holy Grail*, pp. 28-32.

<sup>2</sup> Edited by G. Paris and Jacob Ulrich for the *Soc. des. Anc. Textes*, two vols., 8vo. Paris, 1886.

<sup>3</sup> *Introd.* p. xxvii. Many further details of interest are found pp. xxiii.-L.

<sup>4</sup> See Sommer's ed. *Studies on the Sources*, vol. iii.; London, 1891. *Introd.* p. 7 *sqq.*

<sup>5</sup> Essentially the same as in *Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 95.*

on p. 212, than do the lists in many of the other manuscripts. Still, we have such variations as: "Le ix<sup>e</sup> le fil le Duc de Carduelz, marech de la roche" (f. 173, col. 2), and "the ix<sup>e</sup> was Gifflet" (Eng. p. 212), etc. The French passage quoted on p. 485 of the English translation differs considerably from the same passage in this manuscript, f. 222*b*, col. 1, l. 19, which reads: "Et li herralz commencerent a crieir permi ces rens, or y paira qui bien fera et honour auoir vouldra," though of course the difference is almost wholly verbal. Even less difference appears between the French quoted on p. 563 of the English translation and the version of this manuscript (f. 239, col. 1).

In the list of knights (f. 241*b*), MS. 98 presents essentially the same version as the English text (p. 576 *sqq.*). In Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 95, however, a much more contracted version is found (f. 313). Many other passages agree almost word for word,<sup>1</sup> so that were it not for the violent interjection of the *Prophecies* towards the end this manuscript would agree about as closely with our English version as do most of the other manuscripts. The union of the *Prophecies* with the text of the romance is not very skilfully made. The *Prophecies* are merely cut into fragments and pieced in as follows:—The first passage begins on f. 250, col. 1, l. 19, and extends to f. 258, col. 1, l. 27. Then the *Merlin* begins again, and continues to f. 276, col. 1, l. 14. The *Prophecies* then recommence, and extend to the end of the romance, f. 287*b*. The next leaf begins with the *Lancelot*.

Some changes in the *Merlin* were necessarily made, in order to accommodate the *Prophecies*. We find in this version no account of the enchanted tower in which Merlin is confined by his love (Eng. p. 681), nor of Arthur's charge to Gawain

<sup>1</sup> Cf. f. 263*b*, col. 2, with Eng. p. 639, which tells of the twelve princes sent by the Emperor Luce to Arthur. At the end of the paragraph the English is a little more concise than the French. Cf. also the account of Merlin as harper, Eng. p. 615, with f. 258*b*, col. 1.

to go in search of Merlin (Eng. pp. 680-682). This French version, however, tells us of the dwarf who was dubbed a knight (Eng. p. 682), and conducts him to the court of King Arthur. Then follows: "Mais atant se tait or li conte deulx a parler, et retorne a parler dez prophecies de merlins" (f. 276, col. 1). Of Merlin we hear no more, except as he answers the questions of Antoine. The adapter does not allow Merlin to enter upon his enchanted sleep, for the obvious reason that he is needed for the *Prophecies*.<sup>1</sup>

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Having thus examined and dismissed the versions that evidently could not have served as the actual working originals of the English translation, we have yet to consider the manuscripts which substantially represent the English translation. To enter into a minute comparison of the variations in the different French manuscripts would swell our pages to inordinate proportions, and would be of little real gain to the reader.<sup>2</sup> Until several of the more important manuscripts have been properly collated and printed, any comparison dealing largely with details will be more confusing than helpful. I shall attempt, therefore, in the following pages merely to trace in a rough sketch the chief lines of divergence, and tentatively to group the different versions. By a series of approximations

<sup>1</sup> The strange French romance known as the *Prophéties de Merlin* might, as Gaston Paris remarks (Intro. to *Merlin*, p. xxv. note), be regarded as another continuation of the original romance of *Merlin*. In these *Prophecies* there is far more said than done; and the burden of the talk falls upon Merlin and Bishop Antoine. I have not taken especial account of the *Prophecies*, but they exist in a considerable number of MSS. and in printed editions of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It may be worth while to note that MS. 5229 (old No. 236) (xiv.-xv. cent.) in the Bibl. de l'Arsenal, catalogued as *Histoire de Merlin*, is nothing but the *Prophecies*.

<sup>2</sup> As one minor difference, I note that, except in a few MSS., the paragraphs do not begin at the same points. Sommer's remark to the contrary (*Morte Darthur*, iii. p. 7) was based upon study of a small proportion of the MSS.

we may finally select the version which on the whole is most closely represented by the English text, but we must not expect to find complete agreement.

It will add to clearness if we set aside at the outset as many of the remaining manuscripts as are plainly to be excluded. We thus dismiss as mere fragments—Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 2455 (list No. 7); Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 423 (list No. 13); Bib. Nat. Côté dons, No. 1638 (list No. 22). We may also reject the manuscripts that contain nothing more of the romance than the paraphrase in prose of Robert de Borron's poem of *Merlin*. There can be no doubt that the translator used one of the complete versions of what we may call the vulgate *Merlin*; for the English version bears no marks of having been pieced together with the short *Merlin* of one manuscript and the *Book of Arthur* from another manuscript, but presents in the main a closely literal translation of one of the French versions. Furthermore, each of the manuscripts containing the first branch only of *Merlin* (pp. 1–107) differs too widely in several essentials to allow us to accept it as the actual basis of the English translation. The manuscripts which we exclude are the following:—

Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 748 (list No. 3); Bib. de l'Arsn. MS. fr. 2996 (list No. 4); Bib. de l'Arsn. MS. fr. 2997 (list No. 5); Bib. Nat. Nouv. acq. fr. 4166 (list No. 16); Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 113 (list No. 27).

After these deductions there still remains a considerable number of manuscripts which call for more extended discussion. In many particulars they all agree most surprisingly with the English version. From all of them may be selected long passages which are almost literally reproduced in the English translation. On the other hand, certain other critical passages differ widely from the English text; and these I have taken as points of departure in my tentative classification.



If we were fortunate enough to have but a single authentic version of the French romance, the task of determining what is due to the translator and what to the original would be sufficiently simple. Since, however, the *Merlin* was one of the most popular romances of the Middle Ages, it has been preserved in so great a number of manuscripts that we are embarrassed by our riches.

Our plan involves taking up the manuscripts in something like chronological order and classifying them. Some repetition is inevitable, but I will avoid it to some extent by cross-references.

1. *Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 747* (list No. 2).

The verbal differences between this version and the English translation are enough of themselves to compel us to reject it from the list of possible originals. More important than mere verbal disagreement are some of the differences which I now proceed to note. The French and the English run closely parallel, with here and there a verbal difference, as far as Eng. p. 23. Then follows in the French (f. 82, col. 2, l. 29) a passage of twenty-two lines not represented at all in the translation. This evident interpolation is not found in all the manuscripts (*cf.* MS. 105), and is introduced in order to justify the attempted fusion of the two romances of the *Saint-Graal* and the *Merlin*. At the end of the *Saint-Graal* (f. 77, col. 2, l. 15) we find the words—

“Et retourne a une autre estoire de merlin, *que* il conuient aiouter a fine force avec lestoire del saint graal porce *que* branche en est *et* li appartient. Et comence mesires roberz de borron cele branche en tel maniere. Ml’t fu iriez li annemis *quant* nostre sire ot este en enfer.”

In the interpolated passage (f. 82, col. 2, l. 41) the same matter is again referred to—

“Et *quant* li dui liure seront assamble sen i aura .i. biau, et li dui

seront une meisme chose, fors tant que ie ne puis pas dire ne retraire ne droiz nest les priuees paroles de ioseph et de ihū crist. Einsi dist mes sires roberz de borron qui cest conte retrait," etc.

In this passage, furthermore, no mention is made of the mysterious "maister Martyn" of our English version. He is mentioned in but few French MSS.; and one of the few (B. N. MS. fr. 105) stands in other particulars in closer relations with our English version than do any of the other French texts.

On f. 84*b* begins an interpolation of ninety-two lines relating to the *Saint-Graal*, a passage which differs considerably from our English version (pp. 32, 33).

The most interesting feature of this manuscript is, that it sharply marks off the *Romance of Merlin* (Eng. pp. 1-107) from the *Book of Arthur* which follows. On f. 102, at the end of the *Merlin*, is the passage in which Robert de Borron formally terminates the *Romance of Merlin*. There are nine lines and a half on f. 102*b*; the remainder of the page is blank.<sup>1</sup> The *Book of Arthur* begins at the top of f. 103.

I shall content myself with the mention of a few other differences between this version and the English translation. The list of knights (fr. f. 125, col. 2; Eng. p. 212) differs so widely in the two versions that to exhibit all the variations I should have to copy the whole. For instance, the French has—"li neuïemes li filz do de carduel"; the English, "the ix<sup>e</sup> was Gifflet"; "li onziemes gurnay li bloiz," which hardly represents the English, "the xj. drias de la forrest sauage."

<sup>1</sup> Paulin Paris makes much of this formal mark of division, as being designed to indicate the limits of the original *Romance of Merlin*. He is probably justified in his inference, but there is a bare possibility that this blank is due to the practice common in the Middle Ages of dividing the work of transcription among several copyists. Another blank of a column and a half (f. 188*b*) occurs without any break whatever in the story. Most of the MSS. take no more account of this transition to the *Book of Arthur* than to begin a new paragraph. In one or two cases even this slight break is omitted.

In the list of kings and princes (Eng. pp. 643, 644) the French (f. 215, col. 1) differs considerably in the numerals, and altogether omits Ydier and Aguysans.

It would be easy to furnish additional proofs that this manuscript did not serve as the basis of our translation. Yet in several points it is more in harmony with the English version than, for example, B. N. MS. fr. 24,394, which omits passages found in the English (pp. 146, 147, 187, 188, etc.), and also in MSS. 747, 105, etc.

2. *Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 770* (list No. 8).

This manuscript shows a large number of striking resemblances to B. N. MS. fr. 95, but still has a considerable individuality. MS. 770 cannot be the original of our translation, but it is interesting in that it mentions "maistre martins" (f. 127*b*, col. 1, l. 12)—

"Mais quant il morront parler il naront talent de moi ocirre. *et* le men irai avec aus, *et* tu ten iras es parties ou cil sont qui ont le saint vaissel, et tous iors mais sera volentiers tes liures ois, *et* qui vaurra sauoir la uie des rois qui en la grant bretaigne furent ains que la crestientez i venist, si regart en lestoire des bretons. cest en vn liure que maistre martins de beures tranlata de latin en romans. Mais atant se taist ore li contes de ceste cose *et* retourne a lestoire. Or dit li contes quil ot vn roi en bretaigne qui eut a nom coustans."

As in MS. 95, the list of knights shows remarkable agreement with the English (p. 212), but there are some differences. For instance, in the English the twenty-second knight is "Placidus ly gays," in the French, "Ierohas" (f. 174*b*, cols. 2 and 3); but the English has also "the xxiiij Ierohas lenches," the French, "Ierohas de lanches."

The two French passages quoted in the English translation exhibit verbal differences, not due to the English transcriber.

For the first passage (Eng. 485) we have (f. 249*b*, col. 3, l. 35)—  
*“et li hiraut comencent a crier or i parra qui bien le fera or ert  
 veu.”* Compare also Eng. p. 563, with the French (f. 271,  
 col. 2, l. 9)—

*“Et il les fist si fu teus li contes chou est li commencemens des  
 auentures dou pais. par quoi li merueilleus lyons fu aterre et que  
 fils de Roi et de Roine destraira et conuenra quil soit li mieudres  
 chevaliers qui lors sera el monde.”*

A conclusive proof that this version did not serve as the basis of our translation is, that MS. 770, like MS. 95, gives the contracted version of the list of the princes (f. 274, col. 2, Eng. p. 576 *sqq.*), a list which is expanded in MS. 98 and several other MSS. in the same way as in the English version.

### 3. *Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 95* (list No. 9).

This is, perhaps, the most gorgeous of all the manuscripts of *Merlin*, and from the beauty of the miniatures and the illuminated letters seems to belong to the latter part of the thirteenth century, if not to the early part of the fourteenth. In many passages it stands as close to the English version as any of the manuscripts, but it contains additions and omissions enough to compel us to reject it. For instance, it does not mention “maistre Martins,” and presents the following passage<sup>1</sup> as the equivalent for the English version (p. 23):—

*“Et quant tu aueras ta paine achieuee et tu seras tex come dois  
 estre en la compaignie del saint graal. lors sera tes liures aiains au  
 liure ioseph. si sera la cose bien esprouuee de ma paine et de la  
 toie si en aura diex merchi se lui meisme plaist. et cil qui loront*

<sup>1</sup> This passage may be compared with the one at the end of the *Saint-Graal* (f. 113*b*, col. 1)—*“Chi se taist ore li contes de toutes les lingnies qui de celidoine issirent et retorne a une estoire de Merlin, qui conuient a fine force aioster a lestoire del saint graal, por ce que la branche i est et li apartiens. et comence mesires Robiers en tel maniere come uous pores oir sil est qui le uous die.”*

proieront nostre signor por nos. et quant li doi liure seront ensamble si i aura .i. biau liure. Et li doi seront une meisme cose, fors tant que ne puis pas dire ne retraire les priuees paroles de ih'u c'st et de ioseph." (f. 123, col. 2.)

On the other hand, the list of the forty-three knights (f. 192*a*) shows in the forms of the names and in the order a striking agreement with the English (p. 212). Even the variants are remarkable for the particulars in which they agree. The English has, for example, "The xxix. Agresianx, the newew of the wise lady of the foreste with-oute returne." The French omits the name, and reads, "Li uintenoefismes fu li fieus a la sage dame de la forest sans retour." As the thirty-second knight the English has "kehedin de belly"; the French, "Kehedins li biaux." Most of the other variations in the two lists are mere differences of spelling.

Without burdening our pages with minor differences, such, for example, as Eng. 563 and Fr. f. 309*b*, col. 1, we find convincing proof that neither this manuscript nor exact copies of it could have been used by the English translator, when we compare the list of the princes who come to Salisbury Plain (Eng. pp. 576–578) with the list in the French (f. 313 *a* and *b*). The two versions agree almost word for word, except that the English adds a line or two of description to each knight. These additions amount to about nineteen lines to the page (p. 576½–p. 577½), and are found in MS. 98, f. 241*b*, in MS. 105, and others. The evident explanation is, that MS. 95 represents a group of thirteenth-century MSS. afterwards expanded by a copyist who was also an author.

#### 4. *Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 24,394* (list No. 10).

This manuscript is remarkable for striking points of agreement with the English version, and for equally striking omissions. I have space for but a small portion of the variants.

I give them in the order of their occurrence:—English, p. 15, “x. monthes”; French, f. 112, “ix. mois.” Eng. p. 15, “xij. monthes”; Fr. f. 112, “xviiij. mois.” Eng. p. 61, “thre yere”; Fr. f. 129, col. 2, “plus de ij. ans.” Considerable other verbal differences occur between Eng. pp. 60, 61 and Fr. f. 128*b*—f. 129. This MS. agrees essentially with MS. 95 in presenting the longer version (f. 114*b*—f. 115) in place of the one found in the English translation, p. 23. In giving the list of kings who came to Arthur’s court the English (p. 108) mentions six, the French but five<sup>1</sup> (f. 141*b*, col. 1).

The French version (f. 149*b*, col. 2) omits a passage extending in the English version from “Now, seith the boke” (p. 146, l. 27) to “Now, seith the boke” (p. 147, l. 30). Two other omitted passages are Eng. p. 187, ll. 8–18 (*cf.* Fr. f. 157*b*, col. 1); Eng. p. 188, ll. 5–11 (*cf.* Fr. f. 157*b*, col. 2). Characteristic variations and omissions appear in the following passages:—

ENG. pp. 176, 177.

“And so com) the renoun in to the hoste that the) durste not ride that wey withoute grete foyson) of peple. And so on) that part the kynge Ydiers kepte hem so streyte that the) myght haue no socours of no vitale.

“The tother Citee that the) yede to stuffe was cleped Wydesans, and the dir yede the kynge Ventres of Garlot and ledde with hym knyghtes that were lefte of the hoste.”

FR. f. 155*b*, col. 1.

“Si reuint li renons en lost si qu’il noserent mie cele part cheualcher sans mout grant fuison de gent.

“Lautre cite qu’il enuoierent garnir si ot a non huidesant. A cele ala li rois nantres de garlot si en amena auoc lui <sup>M</sup><sub>ij.</sub> homes de cels qui furent remes en la bataille.”

<sup>1</sup> All six are named in MS. 747, f. 111, col. 1; f. 119*b*, cols. 1 and 2; in MS. 105, etc.

A little lower down the page we find—

ENG. p. 177.

“and the wif of kynge Ventres was suster to kynge Arthur on his moder side, Ygerne, that was wif to Vterpendragon, and wif also to Hoel, Duke of TintageH, that be-gat basyne, the wif of kynge Ventres; and upon this basyne be-gate he his sone, that was so gode a knyght and hardy, as ye shall here her-after, and how he was oon of the C.C.I. knyghtes of the rounde table, and oon of the moste preysed, and his right name was Galashyn.”

FR. f. 155b, col. 1.

“et la feme al roi nantre fu [f. 155b, col. 2] seror le roi artu de par sa mere ygerne, qui auoit este fille al duc hoel de tintaioel. Si ot a non blaisine et de li ot li rois nantres son fil, qui puis fu compains de la table roonde, et fu nommes par son droit non galescin.”

ENG. p. 179.

“kynge loot wente to the Citee of Gale with <sup>M</sup><sub>III</sub> knyghtes.”

FR. f. 156, col. 1.

“li rois loth sen ala a une chite a <sup>M</sup><sub>III</sub> combatans.”

In the list of knights (Eng. p. 212, Fr. f. 163b, cols. 1 and 2) we find—

ENGLISH.

- No. 2. “Boors de Gannes.”
- No. 9. “Gifflet.”
- No. 18. “blioberis.”
- No. 21. “Aladan the crespes.”
- No. 29. “Agresianx, the newew of the wise lady,” etc.

FRENCH.

- “Bohors ses freres.”
- “gyrfe le fil do de cardoel.”
- “bliobleris de gannes.”
- “meleadant.”
- “Agreucil, le fil a lasage dame,” etc.

The English p. 519 has an unusual reading—

FR. f. 239, col. 2.

“and therefore now telle hym that he shall fynde me ther on seinte Berthelmewes day.”

“Or li dites qu’il mi i trouera le ior de la nostre dame en septembre.”

On p. 525 the English agrees with the French—

ENGLISH.

FR. f. 241, col. 1.

“the kyng Looth of Orcanye  
sendith hym to wite that he  
sholde be with hym at Arestuell  
in Scotlonde on oure lady day in  
Septembre.”

“que li rois loth dorcanie li  
mande si *comme* uos aues oi *qu’il*  
soit *encontre* lui a arestuel *en* es-  
coche le ior de la *nostre* dame en  
septembre.”

Wide variations may be pointed out in abundance, as well as almost literal agreement. In the list of princes who come to Salisbury (Eng. pp. 576–578), this Fr. version (f. 254*b*, col. 1 to f. 255, col. 1) supplies all the omissions of MS. 95. The slight variations in the Roman numerals were probably due to haste in copying. Interesting, too, it is to find such agreement as in the following passage, for some of the manuscripts that on the whole agree much more closely with the English version omit the descriptive word *breton*.

ENG. p. 615.

FR. f. 265, col. 2.

“and he harped a lay of Bre-  
teigne ful swetely that wonder  
was to here.”

“et il *harpoit* .i. lai breton tant  
doucement *que* ce estoit melodie  
a escouter.”<sup>1</sup>

The unexpected agreement with the English version of such a manuscript as B. N. 24,394, makes difficult a thoroughly satisfactory grouping of the different versions. A long process of collation must precede any such classification.

##### 5. *Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 110* (list No. 11).

This version agrees with the English translation in several particulars, more closely than does MS. 24,394; but it makes no mention of “maistre Martins,” and has the passage (f. 50, col. 3) omitted from the English, p. 23. The lists of knights

<sup>1</sup> MS. 117, f. 141*b*, col. 1, gives the same version as this French text; while Arsn. MS. fr. 3482, B. N. MS. fr. 105, etc., omit the word *breton*.



(Eng. p. 212; Fr. f. 82, cols. 1 and 2) agree in the main, though the French has some words of description not reproduced in the translation. Other lists—*e.g.*, Eng. pp. 576–578, Fr. f. 142*b*–f. 143; Eng. pp. 593, 594, Fr. f. 145*b*; Eng. p. 616, Fr. f. 149, col. 3—show very close agreement. The two passages quoted from the French (Eng. p. 485, Fr. f. 126*b*, col. 1; Eng. p. 563, Fr. f. 140*b*, col. 1) agree, except for a letter or two, with MS. 24,394, f. 230, col. 1; f. 251, col. 2, l. 15.

6. *Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 749* (list No. 12).

At the beginning of the *Merlin* we find above a row of five miniatures the rubric: “Chi co[m]ence lestoire de merlin que mesire robors de borron translata.” This manuscript mentions (f. 132, col. 2) “mesire martins de roescestre,” who appears in the English version (p. 23) as “maister Martyn.” Nowhere else, except in Arsn. MS. 3482, is he called Martin of Rochester,<sup>1</sup> though a certain *Martin* is mentioned in a few other manuscripts.<sup>2</sup> This passage gives the long version, a part of which does not appear in the English (f. 132, col. 2)—

“*et quant li doi liure seront ensamble. si aura .i. bel liure et li dui seront une meisme chose fors tant que ie ne puis pas dire ne drois nest les priuees paroles de ih'u crist et de ioseph nest cel tans nauoit encore gaires rois crestiens en engleterre. Ne de ceuls qui i auoient este ne me tient a retraire fors tant come a cest conte monte et qui valroit<sup>3</sup> oir conter les rois qui deuant furent, et lor vie volroit oir si qui fist et regardast<sup>4</sup> en lestoire de bretaine que on apelle brutus que mesire martins de roescestre translata de latin en romans ou il le troua si le porroies<sup>5</sup> sauoir vraiment.*”

<sup>1</sup> Paulin Paris remarks (*Romans*, ii. p. 36): “I know no other mention of this Martin of Rochester, rival of Pierre de Langtofte and of our Wace.”

<sup>2</sup> Cf. p. lxviii.

<sup>3</sup> vouroit: P. Paris.

<sup>4</sup> regarde: P. P.

<sup>5</sup> porra: P. P.

Other minor variations forbid us to suppose that the English translator used this version, or a copy of it, though the resemblances are at times surprisingly close. In the list of knights (Eng. p. 212; Fr. f. 195, col. 1) the names are meant to be alike, except that in the English we have "the xlj. bleoris the sone of kynge Boors," and in the French, "li xli.isme fu banins li filleus au roi bohort de gausnes."

In the passages quoted from the French, the first (Eng. p. 485) differs in but one essential word—*bien* for *checun*—

FR. f. 275, col. 2, l. 32.—"*et hiraut comencent a crier | chi est li honors darmes or i parra qui bien le fera |*"

The second passage (Eng. p. 563) shows more variation—

FR. f. 300, col. 2, l. 22.—"*et il les fist si fu i teus li contes. ce sont ichi les auentures dou pais qui par le meruilleus lion fu a terre, et qui fu fieus de roi et de roine destruire et conuenra quil soit castes et li mieudres chr's qui soit aillors el monde.*"

In the list of princes (Eng. pp. 576–578), the French (f. 305) gives the expanded version, in the main the same as in the English version, though with some variations in the numerals and the descriptive details. For example, Eng. p. 576, "kynge Belynans of south wales"; Fr. (col. 2), "rois belinans de nor-gales." I could multiply examples, but those already given must suffice. In classing this version we must place it with the small group of manuscripts that most closely represent the English, though the coincidence is not so great as in MS. 105. Perhaps it stands in closest relation to Arsn. MS. fr. 3482. The manuscript breaks off at f. 330*b* with the words translated in the English by "and whan the [kynge saugh this]," p. 667, l. 27.

7. *Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 19,162* (list No. 14).

This manuscript may be classed with MS. 24,394. For Eng. p. 23 this MS. (f. 152*b*)<sup>1</sup> gives the ordinary version, differing from the English, with no mention of "maistre Martins." The list of kings (f. 187, col. 1) is the same as in MS. 24,394 (*cf.* Eng. p. 108). The equivalent of line fifth on p. 143 of the English is omitted from MS. 19,162, f. 197, col. 2. The passage corresponding to Eng. p. 145, l. 15 to Eng. p. 150, l. 29 is lost from the French manuscript between f. 197 and f. 198, so that we cannot tell whether the passage on pp. 146, 147 is omitted as in MS. 24,394. But this version, like MS. 24,394, omits a line corresponding to a line in the Eng. p. 176, as well as the words "of Gale" (Eng. p. 179). So, too, the passages, Eng. p. 187, ll. 8-18, Fr. f. 208, col. 1; Eng. p. 188, ll. 5-11, Fr. f. 208, col. 2. In the list of knights (Eng. p. 212, Fr. f. 216, col. 2) the version is essentially that of MS. 24,394. On f. 313*b*, col. 1, the usual version "de la nostre dame septembre" appears in place of "Berthelmewes day" of the Eng. p. 519. For the Eng. pp. 576-578 this manuscript gives the usual expanded version.

8. *Brit. Mus. MS. Add. 10,292*<sup>2</sup> (list No. 20).

This version may be classed with MS. 24,394, as is evident from the regular variations that appear in the two versions.

ENGLISH.	FRENCH.
p. 15. "x. monthes."	f. 79, col. 1. "ix. mois."
"xij. monthes."	"xviij. moisq."

<sup>1</sup> Most of the leaves are not numbered.

<sup>2</sup> This is the MS. selected by Sommer for his edition of the romance of *Merlin*.

For Eng. pp. 22, 23 the French, f. 80*b*, col. 3 to f. 81, col. 1, gives the ordinary expanded version, with no mention of "maistre Martins."

The list of kings, with the number of attendant knights (Eng. p. 108), agrees exactly, except that the French, f. 101*b*, col. 1, omits the name of Ydiers. On f. 108, col. 2, the French has nothing corresponding to about a page of the English (pp. 146, 147). On f. 113, col. 1, the French omits a line and a half found in the English, p. 176 (bottom), as well as in MS. 105. On f. 113, col. 2, the French version of Eng. p. 177 is confused, and not so exact as MS. 105. On f. 114*b*, col. 2, the French omits the passage found in the Eng. p. 187, ll. 8–18. From f. 114*b*, col. 2 is omitted the equivalent of Eng. p. 188, ll. 5–11. The list of knights,<sup>1</sup> f. 120, cols. 1 and 2, agrees closely with the English, p. 212, but with such variations as—No. 9, "Gifflet" in the English for "Giffles le fil do de carduel"; No. 29, "the neveu" for "le fil." The passage quoted from MS. 10,292 on pp. 700, 701 of the *Merlin* of the E.E.T.S., agrees almost word for word with B. N. MSS. fr. 96 and 24,394.

9. *Bib. Nat. MS. f. 96* (list No. 24).

This manuscript closely agrees at most points with B. N. MS. 24,394. I give below a few of the data which compel us to reject this version as the original of our translation—

ENGLISH.	FRENCH.
p. 15. "x. monthes."	f. 63, col. 2. "ix. mois."
"xii. monthes."	"xviii. mois."
p. 61. "thre yere."	f. 74, col. 1. "plus de .ii. ans."

<sup>1</sup> For the entire list see Malory's *Morte Darthur* (ed. Sommer), vol. iii. pp. 55, 56, *Studies on the Sources*. Sommer prints also the lists from the Auchinlech MS. of the English verse *Merlin*, from Harl. MS. 6340, and from the English prose version.

For the English of p. 23 the French (f. 65*b*, col. 1) gives the ordinary expanded version, with no mention of "maistre Martins." On f. 82, col. 2, Ydiers is omitted from the list of kings (Eng. p. 108). The French also omits (f. 87*b*, col. 2) the passage corresponding to Eng. p. 146, l. 27 to p. 147, l. 30. From f. 155*b*, col. 1, the French omits a line corresponding to the English, p. 176 (bottom). At this point MS. 96 and MS. 24,394 agree word for word. The English, p. 177, differs widely from the French, f. 91*b*, col. 1 (*cf.* MS. 24,394). From f. 91*b*, col. 2, the same omission occurs as in MS. 24,394 (*cf.* Eng. p. 179). The list of knights, f. 96*b*, is essentially that of MS. 24,394, and agrees closely with the English, p. 212. Wide differences between the English, pp. 438, 439, and the French, f. 134, are found in the numerals, a few of which I select—

ENGLISH.	FRENCH.
"xij. kynges."	x.
"xij. princes."	"x. roys et d'un duc."
"xij. kynges."	x.

Numerous points of difference might be noted, but we need not multiply words. There can be no doubt that this MS. presents essentially the same version as Brit. Mus. MS. Add. 10,292 and B. N. MS. 24,394. On comparing MS. 96, f. 176*b*, col. 2, l. 8, to f. 177, col. 1, with MS. 10,292, f. 216, col. 3, I found the two agreeing almost word for word, except that MS. 96 has later forms for almost all the words.

10. *Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 117* (list No. 25).

This cannot be taken as the exact original of the English version, though many passages agree almost word for word. For the English of p. 23, MS. 117, f. 55*b*, col. 1, gives the

ordinary expanded version, and does not refer to "maistre Martins." In the list of kings (Eng. p. 108; Fr. f. 73, col. 1) the French mentions "Constant qui estoi[t] roi descosse," while the English has "Aguyzas." The French omits "Ydiers." The list of knights (Eng. p. 212; Fr. f. 86*b*, col. 2) differs very widely. The amour of Guyomar and Morgain (Eng. p. 508) is much abridged in this MS. (f. 126*b*, col. 2). The bits of French on p. 485 and p. 563 of the English version agree closely with the corresponding passages in this MS. (f. 123*b*, col. 2; f. 134, col. 2). This MS. has the expanded version (f. 136, col. 2 to 136*b*, col. 1) of the list of princes (Eng. pp. 576-578), and, except in a few of the numerals and other minor details, agrees closely at this point with the English. On p. 620 of the English we have: "Whan the archebisshop hadde redde this letter"; while the French has: "Quant larchevesque de brise ot les lettres leues" (f. 142, col. 2).<sup>1</sup> The name again occurs in the French a little later (f. 145, col. 2: cf. Eng. p. 640). Our English version does not once mention the archbishop by name, though his name appears in many of the French MSS. as well as in Geoffrey of Monmouth. On the other hand, MS. 117 omits much; for example, nearly the whole of the equivalent of Eng. p. 616 (Fr. f. 141, col. 2), including all of the list given in the English and found even in MS. 24,394.

#### 11. *Arsenal MS.* No. 3482 (list 21).

In spite of the very defective state of this manuscript, it has for us more value than some of those better preserved. It is not the exact original of our translation, but it agrees so closely in a great number of passages that I have merely collated with other manuscripts the transcripts I had made from this version

<sup>1</sup> So, too, in MS. 24,394, f. 266*b*, col. 2.

before examining B. N. MS. 105. In a number of passages, however, I must confess that this version is widely at variance with the English. The test passage of the English, p. 23, appears in this MS. (p. 14, col. 3) in part in the usual expanded form, but with the addition of the rare version found in the English translation, suggesting that anyone who is interested in the history of the Britons may study it—

“en lystoire de bretagne *que* len appelle bretus, que mesires martins de rocestre translata de latin en francois, ou la trouua si la porrez sauoir uraiement. En cel temps en i auoit .i. qui estoit constans apeles,” etc.

The numerals afford a peculiarly delicate test of agreement; for the Roman notation used in the manuscripts is far more liable to errors of transcription than the Arabic. The variations in the numerals of this MS. and of the English translation are great enough, but not so striking as in some other MSS. For instance (Fr. p. 62, col. 3), the names of the six kings who came to Arthur's court after his coronation are here given as in the English (p. 108), with the exact number of knights accompanying each king. Even Ydiers is mentioned, though omitted from many of the MSS. I have prepared long lists of the numerals in the French and the English, but omit them for lack of space.<sup>1</sup> In many cases the difference is quite as striking as the agreement, though this manuscript shows less variation than most of the others.

When we turn to the passages that are found in the English, although omitted from several of the French MSS., we learn to

<sup>1</sup> Differences in the numerals may be found by comparing Eng. p. 15, Fr. p. 9; Eng. p. 61, “thre yere,” with Fr. p. 41, col. 1, “plus de .ii. ans”; Eng. p. 145, Fr. p. 81, col. 2; Eng. p. 146, Fr. pp. 81, 82; Eng. p. 184, “xiiij. dayes,” with Fr. p. 101, col. 1, “entre ce et quinsaine”; Eng. p. 187, Fr. p. 102; Eng. p. 188, Fr. p. 103; Eng. p. 576, Fr. p. 271; Eng. p. 613, Fr. p. 306, etc.

appreciate more highly the agreement that we here find. Of the following passages all are omitted from MS. 24,394, MS. 98, etc., yet are found both in the English and in MS. 3482.

ENGLISH.	FRENCH.
p. 146, l. 27 to p. 147, l. 30.	p. 82, cols. 2 and 3 to p. 83, col. 1, ll. 1-5.
p. 176, last line.	p. 97, col. 1.
p. 179, "to the Citee of Gale with <sup>M</sup> <sub>III</sub> knyghtes."	p. 98, col. 2, "a la cite de gales a tout <sup>M</sup> <sub>III</sub> combatans." The words "de gales" are frequently omitted from the MSS.
p. 187, ll. 8-18.	p. 102, cols. 2 and 3.
p. 188, ll. 5-11.	p. 103, col. 1.

On the other hand, the English account (pp. 252-257) of King Clarion of Northumberland, and his battles with the Saxons, is more extended than the account in the French (p. 135). The name of the "arceuesques del brice" is here given (Fr. p. 295, col. 2; Fr. p. 304, col. 3) as in MS. 117, etc., though omitted from the English (p. 620, p. 640). A remarkable reading occurs on p. 243, col. 2, "et ie uous di certainement que il mi trouerra le ior de la saint bertelemi." The English reads (p. 519), "and therfore now telle hym that he shall fynde me ther on seinte Berthelmewes day." The mention of St. Bartholomew's Day is rare, most of the manuscripts preferring the reading, "our lady day in September."

Enough evidence has been adduced to show that while this version can hardly be taken as the exact original of the English translation, the similarity is very great. I will add at this point a few passages, which are, however, no more remarkable for their agreement than hundreds of others to be found in this manuscript.



(a) FR. p. 112, col. 2.

"car il porte el somet<sup>1</sup> dune lance .i. dragon petit, ne guieres grant, qui auoit la queue longue de toise et demie et toute tortice; et auoit la gueule baee<sup>2</sup> si grant quil uous fust auis que la langue qui dedens estoit se branlast<sup>3</sup> tousiours, et li sailloient estanceles et brandons de feu parmi<sup>4</sup> la gueule en lair."

(b) FR. p. 114, col. 3.

"et li dragons que il portoit rendoit parmi la gueule si grant brandon de feu quil sourmontoit amont en lair, que cil qui estoient sus les murs de la cite enueoient la clarte de demie lieue loing et de plus."

(c) FR. p. 199, col. 1.

"Ilec peust len ueoir maint riche garnement et mainte enseigne dor et de soie qui au uent uenteloit,<sup>5</sup> et li airs estoit dous et soues, et li pais biaux et delitables, car moult i auoit fores et praeries ou cil oiseillon<sup>6</sup> chantoient par mains<sup>7</sup> langages,"<sup>8</sup> etc.

ENG. p. 206, ll. 16-19.

"for he bar a dragon that was not right grete, and the taile was a fadome and an half of lengthe tortue; and he hadde a wide throte that the tounge semed braulinge euer, and it semed sparkles of fier that sprongen vp in-to the heire out of his throte."

ENG. p. 210, ll. 8-10.

"and the dragon that Merlin bar caste oute gret flames of fiere, that it sparkled vp in the ayre, that thei vpon the walles of the town saugh the clernesse of the light half a myle longe."

ENG. p. 384, ll. 29-33.

"Ther myght oon haue seyn many a riche garnement and many a fressh baner of riche colour wave in the wynde, and the seson was myri and softe, and the contre feire and delitable, ffor many feire medowes and forestes ther weren, in whiche these briddes singen with lusty notes and cler," etc.

*Note.*—I have collated the two passages (a) and (b) with B. N. MS. fr. 105. Some slight variations of the first passage are found. The second reappears almost literally. (c) Cf. B. N. MS. fr. 105, f. 251b, col. 3.

(a) f. 191b, col. 3.

<sup>1</sup> "Quar . . . portoit ou sommet de la.

<sup>2</sup> basse bee . . . estoit ains que la langue.

<sup>3</sup> se branlast touz.

<sup>4</sup> parmi la gueule en haut en lair."

<sup>5</sup> venteloient.

<sup>6</sup> oiselet.

(b) f. 193, col. 2.

"et li dragons que il portoit rendoit parmi la gueule si grant brandon de feu qui seurmontoit amont en lair, que cil qui estoient sus les murs de la cite en ueoient la clarte de demie lieue loing et de plus."

<sup>7</sup> maint.

<sup>8</sup> langaies.

(d) FR. p. 287, col. 3.

ENG. p. 604, ll. 26 to p. 605, l. 8.

"Ne el chastel nauoit que une seule entree, et estoit si estreite que dui cheualier a cheual ni alassent mie li uns en coste lautre se aenuis non. Par desus cel mares<sup>1</sup> auoit une chauciee de leus en leus ainsint comme del lonc dune lance de pierre et de sablon faite. et de chaus *et* ert espesse et bien faite li remanans des fautes estoit de fust et de planches, pour ce que se besoins uenist au chastel que len ostast les planchessiquens ne peust outre passer. *et* au chief deca<sup>2</sup> la chauciee auoit une eue courant auques rade. mais ele ne portoit pas nauie. Deuant le pie de cele chauciee auoit .i. pin .i. petit ensus de leue dedens .i. praelet qui tenoit bien lespasse dun quartier de terre ou de plus. ou lerbe estoit haute et bele. et li pins estoit [p. 288] biaux et grans et si bien ramus que il peust bien auoir en lombre de lui .c. cheualiers et estoit si gentement duis et si iointement que lune branche ne passoit lautre de hautesce. A une branche de cel pin qui tant estoit biaux et gens comme li contes le deuise pendoit .i. cors diuivre bende dor a une chaenne dargent, que cil sonnoient qui el chastel uoloient herbegier ou qui trespassoient par illec pour demander iouste. A ces .ii. choses seruoit le cor."

"In to this castell was but oon entree, and that was so streite that two horse myght not ther-on mete, oon beside a-nother; and a-bove this marasse was a chauchie fro place to place of the breede of a spere lengthe, made of chalke and sande stronge and thikke and wele made, and this cauchie was of lengthe a stones caste, and the remenaunt was made of planks and of tymbir, so that noon ne myght passe ouer yef the planks hadde betake a-wey; and at the ende of the cauchie was a grete water, but ther-to com no shippes; but it was right feire and plesaunt, and good fisshinge; be-fore the foot of this cauchie was a pyne tre a litill fro the water in a medowe of the space of an acre [p. 605] londe or more, where-yne the grasse was feire and high, and the pyne tre was right feire and full of bowes, so that oon branche passed not a-nother of height, and vpon a braunche of this pyne was hanged by a cheyne of siluer, an horne of yvorie as white as snowe, ffor that thei sholde it sowne that com for to be herberowed in the castell or elles who that passed forth by that wolde aske Iustinge. Of these two thinges served the horne that ther was hanged."

<sup>1</sup> chastel! (B. N. MS. fr. 105, f. 318<sup>b</sup>, col. 1).<sup>2</sup> de la.

(e) FR. p. 293, col. 3 ; p. 294,  
col. 1.

ENG. p. 614, l. 35 ; p. 615, l. 24.

"Tandis com il<sup>1</sup> estoient en tel feste *et* en tel deduit<sup>2</sup> *et* en tel ioie si comme keus aporloit le premier mes deuant le roi artus et deuant la ro [p. 294] guenieure entra leens la plus bele forme domme qui onques mais fust<sup>3</sup> ueue en nule terre de crestiens<sup>4</sup> en une cote de samit uermelle ceins dun bandre de soie a membres dor a pierres precieuses qui getoient si grant clarte<sup>5</sup> que tous li palles en flamboia.<sup>6</sup> *et*<sup>7</sup> ot uns cheueus<sup>8</sup> sores une corone dor en son chief comme rois et ot<sup>9</sup> une harpe a son col qui toute estoit dargent et les cordes dor. et il estoit si biaux de cors et de uis et de membres que onques nule si bele riens ne fu ueue. mais itant li empira son uis<sup>10</sup> que il ne ueoit goute. non pourquant les iex auoit biaux et clers en la teste. et auoit a sa ceinture loie .i. petit<sup>11</sup> chienet a une chaenne dargent qui li estoit atachie a .i. coler de soie a membres dor et le mena cil chiens droitement deuant le roy artus et il harpoit<sup>12</sup> .i. lay<sup>13</sup> si doucement que ce estoit droite melodie a escouter et el refret<sup>14</sup> de son lay saluoit le roi artus et sa compaignie. si lesgarda li rois artus et la roine guenieure *et* tuit et toutes a merueilles. et keus li seneschaus qui le premier mes aporloit sentarda grant piece dasseoir le deuant le roy tant estoit ententis

"And as thei were in this ioie, and in this feste, and kay the stiward that brought the firste mese be-fore the [p. 615] kynge, ther com in the feirest forme of man that euer hadde thei seyn be-fore, and he was clothed in samyte, and girte with a bawdrike of silke harnysshed with golde and precieuse stones, that all the paleys flamed of the light, and the heir of his hede was yelow and criske with a crowne of golde ther-on as he hadde ben a kynge, and his hosen of fin scarlet, and his shone of white cordewan or-fraied, and bokeled with fin golde ; and hadde an harpe abowte his nekke of siluer richely wrought, and the stringes were of fin golde wire, and the harpe was sette with precieuse stones ; and the man that it bar was so feire of body and of visage that neuer hadde thei sein noon so feire a creature ; but this a-peired moche his bewte and his visage for that he was blinde, and yet were the iyen in his heed feire and clier ; and he hadde a litill cheyne of siluer tacched to his arme, and to that cheyne a litill spayne was bounde as white as snowe, and a litill coler a-boute his nekke of silke harneysed with golde ; and this spaynell ledde hym stright be-fore the kynge Arthur, and he harped a lay of Breteigne full

a celui regarder. si se test atant li  
contes ici endroit a parler deuls et  
retorne au roy rion des illes."

swetely that wonder was to here,  
and the refrate of his laye salewed  
the kyng Arthur, and the Quene  
Gonnore, and alle the other after ;  
and kay the stiward that brought  
the first cours taried a-while in  
the settinge down to be-holde the  
harper ententifly. But now we  
moste cesse of hem a-while, and  
speke of the kyng Rion."

I add a collation of the more important variations of  
B. N. MS. fr. 98, f. 258*b*, col. 1 (A); and B. N. MS. fr. 105,  
f. 321*b*, col. 2 (B)—

<sup>1</sup> comme ilz (A); <sup>2</sup> desduit ein*si* comme keux li seneschault (A);  
et en tel bandoun (B); <sup>3</sup> fuit (A) (B); <sup>4</sup> cristiens empiire (A);  
<sup>5</sup> et si grant resplendissement (B); <sup>6</sup> et enenlumina (B); <sup>7</sup> cil  
iouencel (A); <sup>8</sup> ung cresphe cheueux (A); <sup>9</sup> si auoit pendue; <sup>10</sup> et sa  
byaulte (A); <sup>11</sup> petit (*omitted*, B); <sup>12</sup> et puez prist a harper (A); <sup>13</sup> .i.  
lai breton tant doucement *que* ce estoit melodie a escouter (B. N.  
MS. fr. 24,394, f. 265, col. 2); <sup>14</sup> et en la fin de son refrain (A).

## 12. *Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 105* (list No. 18).

This manuscript is, for our purpose, more important than any  
of the others, for it presents the version most nearly resembling  
the version of the English text. An almost literal copy of this  
version is found in *Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 9123* (list No. 19). The  
two manuscripts agree in having rubrics as headings for the  
chapters, a feature not found in many of the MSS. of *Merlin*,  
and, indeed, lacking in the English MS. of *Merlin*. The  
passages taken especially as test passages, where the English  
contains a considerable amount of matter lacking in a number  
of the French texts, are all found in MS. 9123, as well as in  
MS. 105. I give a few references. MS. 9123 has the contracted

version for Eng. p. 23, and mentions as the author of the history of the Britons a certain "Martins de Bieure." The essential identity with the English version may be seen by comparing Eng. pp. 146, 147 with Fr. f. 143; Eng. p. 176, Fr. f. 152, col. 3; Eng. p. 177, Fr. f. 152, col. 3; Eng. p. 179, Fr. f. 153, col. 1; Eng. p. 187, ll. 8-18, Fr. f. 155; Eng. p. 188, ll. 5-11, Fr. f. 155*b*, col. 2; Eng. p. 212, Fr. f. 162*b*, col. 3 to f. 163, col. 1. Same version as in MS. 105: Eng. p. 229, Fr. f. 167*b*, col. 3 to f. 168, col. 1; Eng. p. 485, Fr. f. 244*b*, col. 1; Eng. p. 509, Fr. f. 251*b*, col. 2; Eng. p. 563, Fr. f. 266, col. 3; Eng. p. 576, Fr. f. 269*b* to f. 270; Eng. p. 616, Fr. f. 280, col. 2. The closing pages, except for a letter here and there, are exactly as in MS. 105.

We turn now to MS. 105. This manuscript betrays innumerable evidences of haste in copying,<sup>1</sup> but in its main features it approaches most nearly to the original from which the English translation was made.

The English translation of the test passage (pp. 22, 23) is based on a version slightly differing from this one, but the agreement is more striking than appears in any of the other French versions.

FR. f. 133*b*, col. 1.

ENG. p. 22, l. 35.

"Blaises quist ce *que* mestier  
li fu, et quant il ot tout quis et  
assamble si li commenca a conter  
les amours de ihesu crist et de  
joseph darimachie, si comme eles  
auoient este et de pierre et de

"Blase sought aȝ that hym  
mystered to write with, and when  
he was aȝ redy, Merlyn be-gan to  
telle the lovyng of Ihesu [p. 23]  
Criste and of Iosep Abaramathie,  
like as thei hadden ben of

<sup>1</sup> Especially noticeable is the omission of the substantive verb and of descriptive words. Compare, for instance, Eng. p. 508: "Whan Guyomar entred in to the chambre ther as was Morgain the fee, he hir salued full swetly"; Fr. f. 289*b*, col. 2: "Quant guyomar entra en la chambre ou morgain si li salua moult doucement."

pol, et des autres compaignons si comme il se estoient departi, et le fenissement de joseph et de tous les autres. puis li conta comment dyables apres toutes ces choses furent auenues prirent conseil de ce quil auoient perdu les pouoir quil souloient auoir sus les hommes et sus les femmes, et coument li prophete leur auoient mal fait, et comment il prirent conseil que il feroient vn homme qui auroit leur sens et leur memoire dengignier les gens. et tu as oi par ma mere, et par autrui la paine que il y mirent a moi faire. mais par leur folie moult il perdu.

Elayn) and of Pieron), and of othir felowes like as they weren) departed, and the fynyshment of Ioseph and of alle other. And after he tolde hym that whan) alle thise thynges were don), how the deu-elles toke theire counseile of that they hadde loste their power that they were wonte to haue over man *and* woman), and how the prophetes hadden) hyndred here purpos, and how they were acorded to purchase a man, that sholde haue their witte and mynde to disceyve the peple. 'And thou hast herde be my moder, and also be other, the trauayle that they hadden) to begete me; but through theire foly, they alle loste their trauayle.'

## CHAPTER II.

"Ensi deuise merlins ceste oeuvre, et la fist fere a blaise. Et comment sen esmerueilla blaises de ce que merlins li disoit. *et* toutes uoies ses paroles bones il entendi moult uolentiers. Et endentres quil [f. 133b, col. 2] tendoient a ceste chose fere uint merlins a blaise si li dist, Il te conuient a souffrir de ceste chose *et* ie la souffrerai encore grigneur. blaises demanda comment? Merlins li dit. ie serai enuoiez querre deuers occident. et cil qui me uenront querre aront enconuent a leur seigneur que il locirront. Mais *quant* il morront parler il naront talent

"Thus devised Merlyn this boke, and made Blase to write it, which hadde ther-of so grete merueile that he wolde not telle it to no *persone*, and alwey hym thought that his tales weren gode, and therefore he herkened hem gladly. In the menetyme that they entended a-boute this mater, come Merlyn to Blase, and seyde: 'Thow moste haue grete traueyle a-boute the makynge, and so shaH I haue moche more.' And Blase axed, 'How?' Merlyn seyde: 'I shaH be sente after to seche oute of the weste, and they that shuH come to seche me haue *graunted* their lorde that they

MS. 105, f. 133*b*, col. 2.

“de moi occirre et ie men irai  
auec eulz et tu ten iras es parties  
ou cil sont qui ont le saint uessel.  
et touz iours mais sera volen-  
tiers tes liures oiz. et qui uoudra  
sauoir la vie des roys qui en la  
grant bretaine furent ains *que* la  
crestiente venist si regarde en  
lystoire des roys bretons. cest  
uns liures que martins de bieure  
tranlata de latin en roumans. Mais  
ore se taist li contes de ceste chose  
et retourne a la uraie hystoire”

shuſt me sle, but whan thei come  
and here me speke they shuſt  
haue no wiſt me to sle. And  
I shaſt go with hem; and thou  
shalt go in to that partyes,  
where they be that haue the  
holy vesseſt. And euer here-  
after shaſt thy boke gladly be  
herde, and he that wiſt knowe  
the lyf of kynges whiche were in  
the grete Bretayne be-fore that  
cristendom come, be-holde the  
story of Bretons. That is a boke  
that maister Martyn *traunslated*  
oute of latyn, but heire rested  
this matere. And turneth to the  
storye of Loth, a crysten kyng  
in Bretayne [p. 24] whos name  
was Constance. This Constance  
regned a grete tyme, and hadde  
thre sones, the first hight Moyne,  
and the tother Pendragon, and the  
thirde Vter.’”

There are, of course, variations. If we compare Eng. pp. 32, 33 with the French f. 137, col. 3 to 137*b*, col. 2, we find that the manuscript has an interpolation of 92 lines relating to the *Saint-Graal*, not exactly reproduced in the English. On the other hand, the omissions of MS. 24,394, and others, are here supplied. Compare, *e.g.*, Eng. pp. 146, 147 with f. 173*b*, col. 2 to f. 174, col. 2<sup>1</sup>; Eng. p. 176, Fr. f. 182*b*, cols. 2 and 3; Eng. p. 177, Fr. f. 182*b*, col. 2. The passage relating to the

<sup>1</sup> This passage (Eng. pp. 146, 147), remarks Sommer (*Le Morte Darthur*, vol. iii. p. 44, note), is not found in the French originals. His mistake was due to his examining an insufficient number of MSS., for, as I have already shown, it is found in several.

son of king Ventres is here given exactly, though strangely mixed in some of the versions. Eng. p. 179 reads :

“That than the kyng loot wente to the Citee of Gale with <sup>M</sup><sub>II</sub> knyghtes and fightynge men”;

Fr. f. 183*b*, col. 1 :

“que li roys loth sen ala a la cyte de gales a tout <sup>M</sup><sub>II</sub> combatans.”

Many MSS. omit the words “de gales.” Eng. p. 187, ll. 8–18 is found in Fr. f. 186, and Eng. p. 188, ll. 5–11, in Fr. f. 186, col. 3.

The passage Eng. p. 229, l. 13 *sqq.*, differs somewhat from the French f. 199, col. 3, which here is closely like MS. 24,394. But MS. 105 has the words omitted from many versions—

“la plus sage dame de la bloie bretaigne,”

and thus parallels the English :

“the wisest lady of alle the bloy breteyne.”

A slight difference appears also on comparing Eng. p. 509 with Fr. f. 289*b*, col. 3. The two French passages quoted in the English text have not the precise form that they bear in MS. 105. Compare the version Eng. p. 485 with Fr. f. 282, col. 2 :

“*Et li heraut comencierent a crier. ici est l'onneur des armes. or i para qui bien le fera*” ;

Eng. p. 563 with Fr. f. 306, col. 1 :

“Cest yci li commencemens des auentures du pays par quoi li merueilleus lyons fu aterre, et que fils de roy *et* de royne destruira et couendra que il soit chastes et li mieudres cheualiers qui lors sera el monde.”

This version mentions the “archeuesques del brice” (f. 323*b*, col. 2), while the English has merely “the archebisshop” (p. 620, p. 640, etc.).



In a manuscript so carelessly copied we must not look for exact agreement with the English version ; but for that very reason we must attach considerable importance to the agreement we do find. Nearly all the manuscripts are at variance with the English p. 15. Here the numerals are the same :

ENGLISH.	FRENCH.
p. 15. "x. monthes."	f. 130 <i>b</i> , col. 3. "x. mois."
"ij. yere."	"xij. mois."
"xij. monthes."	"ij. ans."

The names and the numerals, Eng. p. 103, exactly agree with those in the French, though at this point most MSS. vary widely in the numerals, and omit the name of Ydiers. Less exact agreement appears Eng. pp. 145, 146 ; Fr. f. 173, col. 2 to f. 173*b*, col. 1. In the list of knights, Eng. p. 212 ; Fr. f. 193*b*, col. 3 to f. 194, col. 1, there are such differences as—

ENGLISH.	FRENCH.
No. 4, Antor.	Artus qui le nourri.
No. 9, Gifflet.	li filz au duc de cardueil.
No. 19, Canide.	Canot de lisse.
No. 30, Chalis.	Dyales lorfenin.

Other lists showing considerable variation appear, Eng. pp. 576–578, Fr. f. 309*b*, col. 2 ; Eng. p. 616, Fr. f. 322. The latter is a characteristic specimen. I omit all but the most essential details.

ENGLISH.	FRENCH.
Palerens xv.	fariens dirlande xv.
Tasurs xij.	sapharins xij.
Brinans xiiij.	ramedons xiiij.
Argans xj.	arganz xiiij.
Taurus xj.	thaurus xj.
Kahadins x.	kaamin x.

After this comparison we need scarcely devote more space to illustrative passages. There is, on the whole, none of

the manuscripts of *Merlin* showing more general agreement with the English version than does MS. 105. Yet the verbal differences are so great as to compel us to reject even this version from being regarded as the one actually followed by the English translator. Nevertheless, very large portions of this missing French version were literally transcribed by the writer of MS. 105, as may be seen by a glance at passages where the English translator copied the French words without translating them at all.

## ENGLISH.

## FRENCH, MS. 105.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| p. 2, l. 14, and when we hadde assaied hym.   | f. 126 <i>b</i> , col. 2, omitted. (In Huth <i>Merlin</i> , p. 2, "et quant nous l'eusmes essaiié.") |
| p. 3, l. 19, This riche man had grete plente of bestes and of other richesse.       | f. 127, col. 1, Cil riches homs auoit moult grant plente de bestes et dautres richesses.             |
| p. 4, l. 5, and seide a worde of grete ire.   | f. 127, col. 2, et dist vne fole parole que sa grant ire li fist dire.                               |
| p. 7, l. 21, Ye shall abandon yow to alle men.                                      | f. 128, col. 2, vous uous habandonnez aus hommes.  |
| p. 8, l. 32, fuH humble to god.   | f. 128 <i>b</i> , col. 1—col. 2, moult humilians enuers dieu.  |
| p. 10, l. 26, confessed and repentant.  | f. 129, col. 2, confes et repentanz.   |
| p. 27, l. 33, be force of clergie.  | f. 135 <i>b</i> , col. 1, par force de clergie.  |
| p. 34, l. 7, grete doel.  | f. 138, col. 2, grant duel.  |
| p. 40, l. 1, Thus delyuered Merlyn the Clerkes.                                     | f. 140, col. 3, Einsy se deliura merlins des clers.  |
| p. 40, l. 3, the significaunce of the two dragouns.                                 | f. 140, col. 3, la senefiance des .ij. dragons.  |
| p. 59, l. 29, thus be these two tables convenable.                                  | f. 148 <i>b</i> , col. 2, ainsi sont ces .ij. tables conuenables.                                    |
| p. 147, Merlin maunded that aH the harneise and armoure sholde be trussed in males. | f. 149 <i>b</i> , col. 2, si commanda M. que tos li harnois fust trousses en males.                  |

Of like sort are many of the instances of tautology in the English text, though in some instances the fault appears to belong to the translator :—

ENGLISH.	FRENCH.
p. 5, l. 1, FvH wrothe and angry was the DeueH.	f. 127, col. 1, Moult fu li anemis iries.
p. 5, l. 28, And so he taught and enformed hem here creauunce and feith.	f. 127b, col. 2, Moult les aprist bien li preudons et enseigna se eles le uousissent croire.
p. 7, l. 33, fuH hevy and pensif, makyngre grete doeH and sorow.	f. 128, col. 3, Molt fu irie et moult fist grant duel.
p. 8, l. 19, kepe the fro fallynge in to grete ire or wrath.	f. 128b, col. 1, tu te gardes de cheoir en grant ire.
p. 22, l. 8, lest thow me disceyve and be-gyle.	f. 133, col. 3, que tu ne me puisses engignier ne decevoir.
p. 615, l. 29, triste and sorowfull.	Omitted from MS. 105, f. 322, col. 1. (MS. 24,394, f. 265, col. 2, l. 30, reads, "tristes et dolans.")
p. 627, l. 9, the grete mortalite and slaughter.	f. 325b, col. 2, la grant mortalite et la grant occision.
p. 632, l. 36, I haue yow hider somowned and assembled.	f. 327, col. 3, omitted.
p. 643, l. 2, the king hem yaf riche yeftes and presentes.	f. 330, col. 2, si leur donna li roys de moult riches dons.
p. 643, l. 32, Whan the kynge this vndirstode he was gladde and ioyfull.	f. 330b, col. 1, Et quant li roys lentendi si en ot molt grant ioie.
p. 656, l. 32, with grete force and vigour.	f. 334b, col. 3, a force et a vigour.
p. 674, l. 35, and he a-bode gladde and myrye.	f. 341, col. 1, et il demoura en son chastel liez et ioians.
p. 680, l. 4, and he hir taught and lerned so moche.	f. 342b, col. 2, et il li endist et enseigna.
p. 682, l. 35, Whan kynge Arthur hadde a-dubbed the duerf by the preier and request of the damesell, and she had hym	f. 343b, col. 1, a cele heure que li roys artus ot adoube le uain cheualier par la proiere a la damoisele, quele len mena ainsi

[p. 683], ledde as ye haue herde  
gladde and ioyfull . . . .  
[thei] entred in to a feire launde  
that was grete and large.

comme vous auez oi moult liee  
et moult ioianz . . . . .  
[il] entrèrent en vne lande qui  
moult estoit longue *et* large.

Paris  
B.N.

The net result of the entire investigation of the manuscripts is negative. In other words, we have proved that the English version is not translated word for word from any of the extant French versions, though most of them tolerably represent the story as a whole, and many of them agree almost literally in a large number of passages with the English version. Two of the MSS. (MS. 105 and MS. 9123) agree on the whole more closely with the English than do any of the others, and these two doubtless belong to the family of MSS. of which one was used by the translator of our version. I must confess, then, that I have not found the exact original, but I am firmly convinced that the English version is a slavish translation of a fourteenth-century<sup>1</sup> manuscript, now lost, and that a careful collation of all the extant MSS. might enable us to find a French equivalent for almost every word of the translation.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> M. Paul Meyer, Director of the École des Chartes, to whom I submitted the French passages quoted in the English version, pp. 485, 563, assured me that the forms were those of the fourteenth century.

<sup>2</sup> As for the version of the printed editions, it need not detain us long.<sup>a</sup> The earliest edition did not appear till 1498, more than a half-century after our translation was made, and so, of course, can be of importance only in so far as the version of the printed text may represent an older manuscript original. At the beginning of my search for the version used by the English translator I compared paragraph by paragraph the English text and the French edition of 1498, and found a general agreement in the incidents, but very considerable verbal differences, and at times important omissions. I cannot take room for examples, but refer the reader to Fr. vol. i. f. 130, Eng. p. 212; Fr. vol. ii. f. 1, Eng. p. 379; Fr. vol. ii. f. 58, Eng. p. 484. Near the end of the romance, Fr. f. 172, col. 2, a sharp divergence from the English version begins, and continues to the close<sup>b</sup> (f. 172b) of the romance.

<sup>a</sup> Cf. the remarks of P. Paris on the general value of the printed editions.—*MSS. François*, i. pp. 126, 127. <sup>b</sup> Cf. Ward, *Catal. of Romances*, vol. i. p. 343.

## VIII.

## TWO MERLINS OR ONE?

After this long examination of the romance, we may now consider a question that naturally suggests itself: Have we to do with two Merlins or one? This question is of no great importance in itself, but it has held too large a place in the literary history of the legend to be dismissed with a word. The answer to this question involves a comparison of all the data. For the sake of clearness, therefore, it will be well, even at the expense of some repetition, to bring together whatever can be urged with regard to the separate existence of Merlinus Ambrosius and Merlinus Caledonius (Myrddin).

Of Merlin Ambrosius<sup>1</sup> the so-called sixth-century Welsh poems know nothing. In them there is no hint of the existence of the wonder-working Merlin of the romances. The Triads, as we have seen (pp. xcix.-c.), mention Myrddin Emrys (Merlin Ambrosius), Myrddin, son of Morvryn, and Taliessin as the three principal bards of Britain, and tell of the disappearance of Myrddin, the Bard of Emrys Wledig, and his nine bardic companions. But the importance of this material in the Triads is hardly greater than must be attached to what we find in Giraldus Cambrensis, and other writers of the twelfth century.

The introduction of Merlin Ambrosius into Welsh literature (as distinguished from oral tradition) seems to be due to the Welsh translation of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, though of course the legend may have existed as

<sup>1</sup> On Merlin Ambrosius, Rhŷs (*Studies in the Arthurian Legend*, p. 162) remarks: "But under the name Ambrosius or Emrys were confounded the historical Aurelius Ambrosius and the mythic Merlin Ambrosius, in whom we appear to have the Celtic Zeus in one of his many forms."

a floating popular tradition for centuries earlier. The Irish translation of Nennius belongs to the eleventh century; but the legend of Merlin, as well as the history of Arthur, was an exotic which did not thrive on Irish soil. For our earliest knowledge of the exploits of Merlin Ambrose we are, therefore, limited to two sources—Nennius and Geoffrey of Monmouth.

All that Nennius has to tell is contained in cap. xl., xli., xlii., xlviii., and lxvi. of his *Historia Britonum*. He does not even give us the name of Merlin; for the boy who is born without a father, and who explains to the king why his castle walls do not stand, replies, on being asked his name, "I am called Ambrose,"<sup>1</sup> the British for which is Embries, that is, the leader.<sup>2</sup> The addition of the name Merlinus is due to Geoffrey of Monmouth, writing at least three centuries later than Nennius. Geoffrey treated the legend in two different forms, the first in the *Historia Regum Britanniae* (1135–1147), and the second in the *Vita Merlini*. In the *Historia* the entire account of the boy Ambrose, as given by Nennius, is transferred to Geoffrey's pages, but with some changes from the text of Nennius that we possess. These changes are due in part, it may be, to the manuscript version which Geoffrey used; but more probably to his own invention.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Nennius, cap. 42: "'Ambrosius vocor' (id est, Embries Guletic ipse videbatur). Et rex dixit: 'De qua progenie es?' 'Unus est pater meus de consulibus Romanicæ gentis.'" (San-Marte's text.)

<sup>2</sup> It is important to note that not only does Nennius fail to name Merlin, but, as is remarked elsewhere (p. ciii.), the author of the *Genealogies* tacked on to the work of Nennius does not even include Myrddin among the bards of Britain: (cap. 62) "Tunc Talhaern Cataguen (Tat Anguen) [Aguen] in poemate claruit, et Neirin et Bluchbard (Bluchbar) et Cian, qui vocatur Guenith Guant simul uno tempore in poemate Britannico claruerunt." Cf. San-Marte, *Die Sagen von Merlin*, p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> As already remarked, the name *Merlin* is not found in any of the Celtic manuscripts, but the Welsh name Myrddin is the exact phonetic equivalent of the Latin form. G. Paris, in his criticism of de la Borderie's *Les Véritables Prophéties de Merlin*, makes the following comments (*Romania*, xii. p. 375):—"Pourquoi appelle-t-il le barde-prophète du vi<sup>e</sup> siècle *Merlin*? Ce nom est de l'invention de Gaufré de Monmouth, qui sans doute a reculé devant le *Merdinus* qu'il aurait

The chief additions by Geoffrey<sup>1</sup> are the following:—

1. Nennius (cap. xl.) tells us that the king and his wise men, in seeking a place for a tower, came to a province called Guenet,<sup>2</sup> and, after examining the mountains of Heremus,<sup>3</sup> selected the summit of one of them as the site.—Geoffrey says merely that after going about the country they finally came to Mount Eir, and there began to build.

2. Nennius (cap. xli.) relates that the messengers who went out in search of the boy born without a father came to the field of Aelecti,<sup>4</sup> in the district of Glevesing, where they found some boys playing ball. Two of them began to quarrel, and one called the other a boy without a father. When the messengers inquired whether the child had ever had a father, the mother denied all knowledge of the manner of his conception, and assured them that the boy had no mortal father.<sup>5</sup> At this the boy was taken away to King Vortigern.

Geoffrey<sup>6</sup> tells us that the messengers found some young men playing before the gate of a city afterwards called Kaermerdin. As they played, two of the young men, whose names were Merlin and Dabutius, began to quarrel, when Dabutius reproached Merlin—"As for you, nobody knows what you are, for you never had a father." Then the messengers looked closely at Merlin, and asked the bystanders who the boy was. They

obtenu en latinisant le nom gallois, mais qui trouvait assurément dans la tradition une forme avec *d*, puisqu'il prétend que Caermerdin (Carmarthen, ancien Maridunum) doit son nom à Merlin." The name is variously written. Villemarqué, in his *Myrddhin, ou l'Enchanteur Merlin*, p. 3, gives a partial list of the different forms: (1) Ancient British, *Marthin*; (2) Modern Welsh, *Myrdhin*; (3) Armorican, *Marzin*; (4) Scotch, *Meller*, *Melziar*; (5) French, *Merlin*. To these we may add: *Myrdin*, *Myrddin*, *Myrddhin*, *Merðin ap Morvryn*, *Martinus*, *Merlinus Ambrosius*, *Merlin Wyllt*, *Merlinus Caledonius*, *Merlinus Sylvestris*, and *Merlinus Avilonius* (so named from the *Avallenau*). Cf. Nicolson, *Eng. Hist. Library*, pp. 31, 32. For the Welsh form, see p. xcvii., note 1, *ante*.

<sup>1</sup> The passages in Geoffrey's *Historia* that parallel the account by Nennius are: B. vi. 17, 18, 19; B. vii. 3, up to the point where the prophecy begins.

<sup>2</sup> Guined, Guoinet, Guenez. <sup>3</sup> Heremi, Heriri, Eryri. <sup>4</sup> Elleti, Electi, Gleti.

<sup>5</sup> Strangely enough, in the very next chapter (xlii.) the boy tells the king, "My father was a Roman consul."

<sup>6</sup> *Hist.* vi. 17.

replied that his father was unknown, but his mother was daughter to the king of Dimetia, and now a nun in St. Peter's church in that city. The messengers thereupon went to the governor of the city, and ordered him to send Merlin and his mother to King Vortigern. On being questioned by the king, the mother replied that the boy's father was a very beautiful young man, who had the power of talking with her while remaining himself invisible, and that he had several times lain with her in the shape of a man, and left her with child. The king wondered at the recital, and ordered his counsellor, Maugantius, to tell whether the story was possible. He said that numerous instances of a like description were known, and that possibly the boy had been begotten in the same way; for Apuleius, in his book on the Demon of Socrates, had mentioned those spirits, half men, half angels, which live between the earth and the moon, and which we call incubuses. These had been known to assume human shape and to lie with women.

3. Nennius relates (cap. xlii.) that on the next day after the boy had appeared before King Vortigern a meeting was held for the purpose of putting him to death. When the boy asked the reason of his being brought there, he learned that it was with the design of sprinkling with his blood the ground on which the tower was to be built. He then requested that the wise men by whose advice this was to be done might be brought thither. When they came, he questioned them as to what was hid under the ground where the tower was building. On their confession of ignorance, he foretold successively what was to be found—the pool, the two vases, the folded tent, the two sleeping serpents, one white and the other red—and explained the meaning of their combat.

Geoffrey gives in the main the same account,<sup>1</sup> but in his version the conversation with the king, the questions addressed

<sup>1</sup> *Hist.* vi. 19; vii. 3.



to the wise men, and the combat of the two dragons, occur on the same day, without the interval that we find in Nennius. Geoffrey substitutes two hollow stones for the vases of Nennius, and tells nothing about the folded tent in which the dragons slept. Geoffrey has the pond drained before the fight begins, while Nennius lets the combat commence at once.

From this point the agreement between Nennius and Geoffrey, in so far as Merlin is concerned, entirely ceases. The short explanation which Nennius gives of the meaning of the combat is omitted by Geoffrey, who, on the other hand, fills the greater part of his seventh book with the famous prophecies of Merlin. The remainder of Geoffrey's account of Merlin touches upon his relations with Aurelius Ambrosius and Uter-Pendragon—the two sons of Constantine. After Merlin has assisted Uter-Pendragon to win Igerna the name of the enchanter vanishes from Geoffrey's pages, except in two brief references<sup>1</sup> to his prophecies. In spite of these minor differences the accounts of Nennius and Geoffrey relate to the same personage: the additions merely show what progress the myth had made in the course of three centuries.<sup>2</sup> But if, now, we turn to Geoffrey's *Vita Merlini*, we meet a difficulty; for, although we still find the name Merlin, a small portion only of the account of him as given in the *Historia* is reproduced in the *Vita*, and the leading topic in the poem is the madness of Merlin the bard. Yet the identity of the bard with the enchanter is directly asserted in the poem.<sup>3</sup> With this matter we shall deal presently.

<sup>1</sup> *Hist.* xii. 17, 18.

<sup>2</sup> It would be interesting to compare the growth of the Merlin legend with the growth of other mediæval legends. The *Chanson de Roland* in its finished form belongs to the latter part of the eleventh century, while the battle of Roncevaux was fought August 15, 778. The legends attaching to Godfrey of Bouillon were evolved somewhat more rapidly.

<sup>3</sup> ll. 681–683. San-Marte remarks (*Die Sagen von Merlin*, s. 322) that from about l. 431 Geoffrey begins to confuse Merlin Ambrosius with Merlin Caledonius. Geoffrey says (l. 681 *sqq.*) that Merlin the bard is the same as he who once prophesied before Vortigern; but he omits all account of the paternity of Merlin as related in the *Historia*.

It may be worth our while briefly to review some of the opinions held on this question. One side contends stoutly for two Merlins. It is argued that there was an enchanter of the name of Merlin, who lived, if at all, in the time of Vortigern, king of Britain, about the end of the fifth century. His history contains elements more or less mythical. The other personage was a Welsh bard, named Myrddin, who lived in the sixth century, and who went mad with grief over his friends killed in the battle of Arderydd, in the year 573. As already remarked, Nennius knows only the fatherless boy who calls himself Ambrosius, or Embres Guletic.<sup>1</sup> Geoffrey of Monmouth repeats the story told by Nennius, adopts the name Ambrosius, and adds that of Merlinus.<sup>2</sup> His other additions in the *Historia* are merely supplementary, and in no essential particulars contradictory to the account in Nennius. In the *Vita Merlini* Geoffrey calls him Merlin throughout, but he tells us that “rex erat et vates,” and though, as we have seen, he identifies<sup>3</sup> the Merlin of the *Vita* with the Merlin of the *Historia*, he surrounds the bard with a group of persons<sup>4</sup> unknown in the earlier work. The *Vita* can hardly be placed later than 1150; so that the identification of the bard with the enchanter was made at a very

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. Brit.* cap. xlii.

<sup>2</sup> In touching on these names M. Gaston Paris strangely says: “Ce double nom, *Merlinus Ambrosius*, ne se présente que dans la *Prophetia Merlini* de Gaufrici, que nous prenons ici sur le fait, accolant son *Merlinus* à l’*Ambrosius* [sic] de Nennius; dans le corps de son livre (publié après la *Prophetia*), il dit simplement *Merlinus*” —G. Paris, *Romania*, xii. 371, note. Yet Geoffrey has in the *Historia*, vi. 19 (San-Marte’s edition, *Sagen von Merlin*, pp. 19, 20): “Tunc ait Merlinus, qui et Ambrosius dicebatur”; and four lines below: “Accessit iterum Ambrosius Merlinus ad magos.” In the *Prophecy* we find (cap. i.) “de Merlino”; (cap. ii.) “Merlini”; and (cap. iii.) “Ambrosio Merlino.” These are the only cases where the double name is mentioned.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. also George Ellis, *Eng. Hist. Library*, Lond. 1786, p. 31; F. Michel, *Vita Merlini*, pp. xviii., xix.; San-Marte, *Die Artussage*, p. 90.

<sup>4</sup> Such, for instance, as his sister Ganiada, ll. 122-124; Peredur, l. 31; Rodarchus, l. 32, etc. Cf. the later discussion in this section.

early stage of the literary development of the materials, be they legendary or historical, or both.

The first attempt<sup>1</sup> of which we have any record to make a *formal* distinction between Merlin the enchanter and Merlin the bard is due to Gerald de Barri, better known as Giraldus Cambrensis. In his *Cambriae Descriptio*,<sup>2</sup> written near the end of the twelfth century, we find the following (cap. xvi.): "Sicut et olim, stante adhuc Britonum regno, gentis excidium, et tam Saxonum primo, quam etiam Normannorum post adventum Merlinus uterque, tam Caledonius quam Ambrosius fertur vaticinando declarasse." After comparing the prophecies of Merlin with those of Scripture, he adds: "Merlini itaque prophetiam legimus, sanctitatem eius vel miracula non legimus. Obiiciunt, et quia prophetiae non extra se fiebant, quando prophetabant, sicut de Merlino Silvestri legitur, quod amens factus prophetabat, et de his similiter quasi arreptitiis, de quibus hic locuti sumus."

Also, in the *Itinerarium Cambriae*, i, 10, he refers to Caermardyn: "Sonat autem Caermardyn, urbs Merlini, eo quod iuxta Britannicam historiam ibi ex incubo genitus, inventus fuerat Merlinus." In ii, 6: "Ea nocte iacuumus apud Nevyn videlicet vigilia paschae floridi; ubi Merlinum Silvestrem diu quaesitum, desideratumque Archidiaconus Menevensis dicitur invenisse."

Most important of all is the passage in cap. viii.: "Non procul ab ortu (fluminis) Conwey in capite montis Eryri, qui ex hac parte in Boream extenditur, stat Dinas Emrys, i.e. promontorium Ambrosii, ubi Merlinus prophetavit, sedente super ripam Vortigerno. Erant enim Merlini duo, iste qui et Ambrosius dictus est, quia binomius fuerat et sub rege Vortigerno prophetavit, ab incubo genitus, et apud Caermerdthin inventus; unde

<sup>1</sup> That is, unless we assume the Triads to be older than we thought them.

<sup>2</sup> For all these texts, conveniently brought together, see San-Marte's *Sagen von Merlin* Zeugnisse, pp. 37-58.

et ab ipso ibidem invento denominata est Caermerdhin, i.e. urbs Merlini. Alter vero de Albania oriundus, qui et Celidونیus dictus est, a Celidonia silva, in qua prophetavit, et Silvester, quia cum inter acies bellicas constitutus, monstrum horribile nimis in aera suscipiendo prospiceret, dementire coepit, et ad silvam transfugiendo silvistrem usque ad obitum vitam perduxit. Hic autem Merlinus tempore Arthuri fuit, et longe plenius et apertius quam alter prophetasse perhibetur.”<sup>1</sup>

In another place<sup>2</sup> Giraldus repeated his distinction between the two Merlins, and remarked that the Caledonian Merlin was much less known than the other, and that it seemed to him worth while to collect and publish whatever information he could find about the man: “Erat itaque Caledonii Silvestris solum hactenus fama percelebris; a Britannicis tamen Bardis, quos poetas vocant, verbo tenus penes plurimos, scripto vero penes paucissimos vaticiniorum eiusdem memoria retenta fuerat.”

Giraldus has some other references to Merlin, of much less importance. From Geoffrey's *Historia* he takes the account of Merlin's transfer of the great stones from Ireland to Stonehenge. He tells also of the wonderful Lech-lavar or talking-stone, with which vulgar tradition had connected a prophecy of Merlin, but whether of Merlin Ambrosius or Merlin Caledonius we cannot affirm, for the prophecy is not given by Geoffrey.

We must not make too much of negative evidence, but we note in the work of William of Newburgh (b. 1135-6? d. 1200?) an omission that seems a little surprising, if we

<sup>1</sup> San-Marte, *Die Sagen von Merlin*, p. 52.

<sup>2</sup> “Noch um 1180 scheint die wälsche Tradition bestimmt den Ambrosius und Merlin unterschieden zu haben, wie aus dem *Itinerarium* des Giraldus Cambrensis hervorgeht, der mit eben so ungemeiner Begier als Leichtgläubigkeit dergleichen Volkssagen sammelte, doch aber Gottfrieds *Chronik* einmal eine *fabulosa historia* nennt” (*Cambriae Descriptio*, cap. vii.). San-Marte, *Die Artussage*, pp. 91, 92.

assume that two Merlins were well known in his day. William of Newburgh criticized very severely Geoffrey's *Historia* as being full of falsehoods, and especially blamed the lively churchman for introducing the prophecies of Merlin,<sup>1</sup> who was fabled to have had a woman for his mother and a demon incubus for his father. William makes, however, no mention of two Merlins, and seems to know of Merlin Ambrosius only.

Some of the other data at our disposal are not easy to interpret. For instance, in two old lives of St. Patrick—one by Jocelyn, at the end of the twelfth century, and the other doubtfully attributed to Beda—is an account of a certain evil-doer, who, by the prayer of St. Patrick, was mysteriously raised into the air and dashed to the ground a corpse.<sup>2</sup> Jocelyn gives the man the name *Melinus*, while Beda (?) calls him “mago quodam nomine Locri.” It is, however, by no means certain that our Merlin is here referred to at all. Mere identity of name does not necessarily prove identity of personality.

Ralph de Diceto, who died in the year 1210, mentions Merlin as a bard born of a demon incubus and a king's daughter, who was a nun and lived in the city of Caermarthen. This account, of course, merely follows Geoffrey's *Historia*.

In the course of the next hundred years no writer seems to have thought the matter worth mentioning; for not until the appearance of Ranulf Higden's *Polychronicon*, in the first half of the fourteenth century, do we find any further attempt to distinguish the magician of the time of Vortigern from the

<sup>1</sup> William refers with scorn to the “lying prophecies of a certain Merlin, to which he (Geoffrey) has himself added considerably.” Paulin Paris infers from William's attitude that the Merlin legend was not very old at the time when Geoffrey wrote. Cf. *Romans*, i. 65-72. Just here we may note Mr. Ward's remark (*Catal. of Romances*, i. 210) on Henry of Huntingdon, that “though he appears to have had no great taste for marvels, it is certainly odd that he never once mentions the name of Merlin, as one would have anticipated if Merlin had made any great figure in the first recension” (of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia*).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. San-Marte, *Die Sagen von Merlin*, pp. 51, 52.

bard of the sixth century. The doggrel rhyming Latin verses<sup>1</sup> which Higden wrote on Merlinus Ambrosius and Merlinus Caledonius reproduce much of the phraseology of Gerald de Barri, and add really nothing to the solution of the question.<sup>2</sup>

Merlin is referred to by a number of other writers of the Middle Ages. Thus, Sigebertus Gemblacensis<sup>3</sup> mentions a prophecy of Merlin relating to Arthur; and the monk of Malmesbury who wrote the life of Edward III. remarks on the year 1315 that, in consequence of a prophecy of Merlin predicting the recovery of England by King Arthur, the Welsh raised frequent revolts. Merlin is in each case referred to as a well-known name, without any hint of the existence of a second Merlin.

The fourteenth-century *Scotichronicon* of John Fordun touches<sup>4</sup> on the Merlin of Geoffrey's *Historia* as—"quidam

<sup>1</sup> "Ad Nevyn in North Wallia  
Est insula permodica  
Quae Bardisia dicitur,  
A monachis incolitur,  
Ubi tam diu vivitur  
Quod Senior praemonitur.  
Ibi Merlinus conditur  
Silvestris ut asseritur.  
Duo fuerunt igitur  
Merlini ut conicitur  
Unus dictus Ambrosius  
Ex incubo progenitus  
Ad Kaermerthyn Demeciae  
Sub Vortigerni tempore  
Qui sua vaticinia  
Proflavit in Snaudonia.  
Ad ortum amnis Coneway  
Ad clivum montis Erery,

Dinas Emreys ut comperi  
Sonat collis Ambrosii  
Ad ripam quando regulus  
Vortiger sedit anxius.  
Est alter de Albania  
Merlinus, quae nunc Scotia;  
Repertus est binomius,  
Silvestris Calidonus,  
A silva Calidonia  
Qua prompsit vaticinia,  
Silvestris dictus ideo,  
Quod, consistens in praelio,  
Monstrum videns in aere  
Mente coepit excedere,  
Ad silvam tendens propere  
Arthuri regis tempore  
Prophetavit apertius  
Quam Merlinus Ambrosius."

*Cf.* further, F. Michel, *Vita Merlini*, pp. xix., xx.; and Nash, in the first volume (pp. xii., xiii.) of the *Merlin*, E.E.T.S.

<sup>2</sup> Higden does indeed tell us that the Caledonian Merlin lost his reason at seeing a phantom in the air instead of at the sight of his friends slaughtered in battle; but even this account is borrowed from Giraldus Cambrensis, and can at most be nothing more than a variant of the commonly received version.

<sup>3</sup> San-Marte, *Die Sagen von Merlin*, p. 54.

<sup>4</sup> iii. c. 17.

ex Cambria, Merlinus nomine, plura quasi prophetice cecinit ad intelligendum obscura,"<sup>1</sup> etc.

With this account we may compare that of Powel,<sup>2</sup> who, as Francisque Michel remarked,<sup>3</sup> lived at a time when "the prophecies of the British bard [?] still preserved their authority."

Toward the end of the sixteenth century, Buchanan, in his Scottish history, compares the Merlin of the time of Vortigern with Gildas, somewhat to the disadvantage of the former, and says that Merlin ought rather to be regarded as a great deceiver and a crafty old fellow than as a prophet. Buchanan, like several of the other writers we have examined, seems to know but one Merlin. Yet the distinction made by Giraldus Cambrensis is repeated early in the second half of the sixteenth century in Bale's *Illustrium Maioris Britanniae Scriptorum Catalogus*,<sup>4</sup> which gives (p. 48) an account of Merlinus Ambrosius, followed by one of Merlinus Caledonius (p. 59).

The elaborate commentary by Alanus de Insulis (cf. p. xlvii.)

<sup>1</sup> Cf. in Hearne's edition of Fordun, pp. 202, 212, 251, 709, 755, 1206, 1208, 1226. See also Mr. Ward's article on *Lailoken* in the *Romania* for 1893, pp. 510, 511, in which he shows how Fordun's work was interpolated later by Bower, who finished his revision in 1447.

<sup>2</sup> "Merlinus ipse natus est in Cambria, non ex incubo daemone (ut inquit Baleus), sed ex furtiva venere cuiusdam romani consulis cum virgine vestali in Maridunensi monialium coenobio, ut in Brevario apud Gildam habetur." He then goes on to give an abstract of Geoffrey of Monmouth, and continues: "Aliunde ergo per impostores asseritur eius conceptio, quam ex communi hominum officio et uso, ut facile deciperent creduli. . . . Dicitur etiam quod suis incantationibus Utherum regem in Gorloldis Cornubiae ducis speciem transformaverit, ut Igernae uxoris potiretur amplexu et quod ex eo scelerato concubitu Arthurum et Annam genuerit; sed de his prudentes iudicent. De Maridivi urbis nomine vide ea quae annotavimus supra in cap. x. lib. 1. Extant apud Galfridum Hist. Britannicae libro quarto [?] Merlini vaticinia, obscura quidem illa et nihil certi continentia, quae vel antequam eveniant, sperare, vel cum evenierint promissa, vera audeas affirmare. Praeterea ita composita sunt ut eadem ad multa diversarum, rerum eventa sensibus ambiguis et multiplicibus, circumflectere et accommodare quis possit. Et quanquam multi his et huiusmodi imposturis delusi et decepti perierint tamen hominum credulorum tanta est insania ut quae non intelligant, quovis sacramento, vere esse contendere non dubitent nec in manifesto interim deprehensi mendacio se coargui patiantur."—Quoted by F. Michel, *Vita Merlini*, pp. x.—xiii.

<sup>3</sup> *Vita Merlini*, p. x.

<sup>4</sup> Basiliae, apud Iohannem Oporinum (M.D.LIX.), fol.

on Merlin's prophecies was published in 1603; but neither this work nor Freytag's *Programma de Merlino Britannico*, printed in Naumburg in 1737, brought to light any new material relating to the question now before us. In 1748 Bishop Tanner gave a biography of the two Merlins in the *Bibliotheca Britannico-Hibernica*<sup>1</sup> (pp. 522-525). Nearly forty years later Bishop Nicolson published, in his *English Historical Library*<sup>2</sup> (pp. 31, 32), a careful bibliographical account of authorities on English history, and, in characteristically vigorous style, proved to his own satisfaction that all the supposed Merlins were really but one.<sup>3</sup> The rough-and-ready dogmatism of the Bishop failed to carry conviction to Sir Walter Scott; for, in his *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*,<sup>4</sup> he distinguishes Merlin

<sup>1</sup> Lond., 1748, fol.<sup>2</sup> Lond., 1786, fol.

<sup>3</sup> "Amongst these bards is to be reckoned their famous *Merlyn*; whose true name (says *Humph. Lhuid*) is *Merdhyn*, so called from *Caermarthen* [*Mariduno*], where he was born. This was so mighty a Man in his Time that our Writers have thought it convenient to split him into three. The first of these (Godfather to the two following) they call *Merlinus Ambrosius* or *Merdhyn Emrys*; who liv'd about the Year 480 and wrote several prophetic Odes, turned into Latin Prose by *Jeffrey of Monmouth*. The next is *Merlinus Caledonius*, who liv'd A.D. 570, wrote upon the same Subject with the former, and had the same Translator. The third is surnamed *Avalonius*, who liv'd under King *Malgocunus* (they might as well have made him Secretary to *Joseph of Arimathea*, says our great *Stillingfleet*); and yet my Author<sup>a</sup> goes gravely on, and affirms that he was an eminent Antiquary, but seems to mix too many Fables with his true story. They write this last, indeed, *Melchinus*, *Melkinus*, and *Merwinus*, and make him to live some time before the latter *Merlyn*. But this is all stuff, and he is manifestly the same Man or nothing. The most learned of the *British* Antiquaries agree that this *Myrdhyn ap Morvryn* (call'd from the country he lived in *Caledonius*, and *Sylvestris* from his Humour of leading a retired life in the woods) wrote a Poem called *Apallennau*, or the Apple-Trees, to his Lord *Gwemdholen ap Keidio*; who was slain at the Battle of *Arderith*, in the Year 577. Some Fragments of this Poem were found at *Hengwyrt*, in *Meirionydshire*, by Mr. Lhwyd; who long since observed to me that from hence the Poet himself got the surname of *Avalonius*. If so, there's a happy Discovery made of one of the many foolish Impostures of the old Monks of Glassenbury: Who, to secure this famous Prophet to themselves, have made King *Arthur's* Tomb and their own Monastery to stand in *Insula Avallonia*. Soon after him came *Ambrosius Thaliessin*, whom *Bale* and *Pits* make to live in the Days of King *Arthur*, and to record his story."

<sup>a</sup> J. Pits, p. 97, *Hist. Regum Britannorum*.<sup>4</sup> Edinburgh, 1833, vol. iv. pp. 141, 143.



the Wild from Ambrose Merlin, and to the former attributes the Scottish prophecies.

Sixteen years later, in 1849, Thomas Stephens, in his *Literature of the Kymry* (p. 208 sqq.), reaffirmed the identity of Merlin Caledonius with Merlin Ambrosius. His argument, in brief, is as follows:—Nennius represents Myrddin Emrys as a child who appears before King Vortigern, about 480 A.D. On the other hand, the Myrddin ab Morvryn of the Welsh poems is an old man who, about 570 A.D., is the brother-in-law of Rhydderch Hael, one of the three victorious princes in the battle of Arderydd.<sup>1</sup> In order to affirm the identity of the two prophets, we must assume an age of more than ninety years; but this was not exceptional in Wales. Then we have the striking fact that the two prophets lived in North Wales and North England—districts not widely separated—and that their prophecies show considerable similarity. Furthermore, the bards of the twelfth century and later took the prophecies of Merlin Ambrosius, as given by Geoffrey of Monmouth, and let them reappear as prophecies of the Caledonian Merlin, thus showing that the two bards were held to be identical. This conclusion was natural enough, for the father of the Caledonian Merlin was known, while the traditional Myrddin Emrys was a child without a father, and seemed therefore less real than the bard whose father was named.

San-Marte seems to adopt the view of Stephens, for he concludes his summary of Stephens' argument in these words: "Und so gelangt Stephens zu dem wohlmotivirten Resultat, dass Merddin Emrys und Merddin ap Morvryn, Wyllt und Silvester, wie Merlin der Barde, Zauberer, und Prophet nur verschiedene Namen für eine und dieselbe Person seien."<sup>2</sup>

A different conclusion was reached by the French critic Villemarqué. He regarded Merlin Ambrosius as a historical personage, associated as a bard with King Aurelius Ambrosius.

<sup>1</sup> Fought in 573 A.D.

<sup>2</sup> *Die Sagen von Merlin*, p. 235.

By a singular series of etymological guesses, Villemarqué tried to establish a connection between the Breton *Marzin* and the Latin *Marsus*, son of Circe. Although he held that Myrddin the Welsh bard had really lived, he would not affirm that any of the poems attributed to him are genuine.

For several years after the appearance of M. de la Villemarqué's theory the only critic of note who touched on the Merlin problem was Mr. D. W. Nash.<sup>1</sup> His theory rejects altogether the view of Mr. Stephens and others, who hold that the "Merddin Emrys of Vortigern and Merddin the son of Morvryn must be taken to have been one and the same person, and that the latter is the one whose character formed the nucleus from which the other was developed." "Merddin Emrys" (Merlin Ambrosius) has in Nash's view no claim to be regarded as a historical character. To use again his words: "We ought, I think, to look upon the figure of the great enchanter as a pure work of fiction woven in with the historical threads which belong to this epoch of the Saxon wars in Britain."<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, he adds: "So far from being of unknown or mysterious birth, the pedigree of Merddin Caledonius is as well ascertained as that of any other British celebrity."<sup>3</sup>

Mr. Skene did not discuss this specific question in the *Four Ancient Books of Wales*,<sup>4</sup> but he established more firmly than before the historical character of a Welsh bard bearing the name of Myrddin.

The conclusion arrived at by Stephens, in his *Literature of the Kymry*, that Merlin Ambrosius, Merlyn Sylvester, and Merlin Caledonius were one and the same person, was adopted by M. Paulin Paris in his *Romans de la Table Ronde* (i. p. 80).<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> His short paper was prefixed to Part I. of the *Romance of Merlin* (1865), edited by Mr. Henry B. Wheatley for the E.E.T.S.

<sup>2</sup> pp. viii., ix.

<sup>3</sup> p. x.

<sup>4</sup> Edinburgh, 1868, 2 vols., 8vo.

<sup>5</sup> "Mais (dira-t-on, pour expliquer la différence des légendes) il y eut deux prophètes du nom de Merlin : l'un fils d'un consul romain, l'autre fils d'un démon incubé ; le premier ami et conseiller d'Artus, le second, habitant des forêts ; celui-ci

His son, M. Gaston Paris, though less pronounced, seems to hold essentially the same opinion.<sup>1</sup>

The last critic that I shall cite, Mr. H. L. D. Ward,<sup>2</sup> regards the Merlin who was brought before Vortigern as purely legendary and mythical; while the Myrddin of the Welsh poems is historical, and is to be assigned to the latter part of the sixth century and the beginning of the seventh. In a paper published in the *Romania*<sup>3</sup> for 1893, pp. 504-526, Mr. Ward proves that a wild man of the name of Lailoken,<sup>4</sup> who lived in the time of St. Kentigern, is to be identified with Merlin Silvester, otherwise known as Merlin the Wild or Merlinus Caledonius. This wild man one day meets St. Kentigern and begs the good man to listen to him. Then he goes on to accuse himself of being the cause of the death of all those who were slain in the battle "inter

surnommé *Ambrosius*, celui-là *Sylvester* ou le *Sauvage*. L'*Historia Britonum* a parlé du premier, et la *Vita Merlini* du second. Je donnerai bientôt l'explication de tous ces doubles personnages de la tradition bretonne: mais il sera surtout facile de prouver à ceux qui suivront le progrès de la légende de Merlin que l'*Ambrosius* le *Sylvester* et le *Caledonius* (car les Écossais ont aussi réclamé leur Merlin topique) ne sont qu'une seule et même personne."

<sup>1</sup> "M. de la Borderie appelle toujours la *Vita Merlini* en vers, *Vie de Merlin le Calédonien*, et dit qu'elle a été écrite 'sur la fin du xii<sup>e</sup> siècle'; mais ce poème est sans aucun doute de Gaufrei de Monmouth, et a été par conséquent écrit avant 1154. Quant au surnom de *Caledonius* (ou plutôt *Celidonius*, ou *Silvester*) donné à Merlin, il ne figure pas dans le poème; il est de l'invention de Giraud de Barri (Itin. Kambr., ii. 8), qui, frappé de l'anachronisme qu'avait commis Gaufrei, a essayé, à la façon des gens du moyen âge de tout concilier en supposant deux Merlin; mais la *Vita Merlini* dit expressément que son héros était le même qui avait jadis parlé à Wortigern."—*Romania*, xii. 375, 376.

<sup>2</sup> De même, pour concilier l'*Historia Britonum* avec Gaufrei, il dit: "*Merlinus* qui et *Ambrosius dictus* est, quia binominis fuerat."

<sup>3</sup> Author of the *Catalogue of Romances in the Department of MSS. in the British Museum*. This opinion I got from Mr. Ward in conversation, April 22, 1890.

<sup>4</sup> Mr. Ward prints in full the Latin texts that contain the account of Lailoken. The oldest of these, Cotton Titus A. xix., he places in parallel columns beside the later mutilated version in Bower's *Scotichronicon*. Of this oldest version Mr. Ward says that it was "written at the request of Bishop Herbert (and therefore before 1164) by a cleric of St. Kentigern's, who was apparently a foreigner."

<sup>5</sup> Cf. pp. cviii.-cxi. above.

Lidel et Carwonnok," i.e. the battle of Arderydd (A.D. 573). A variety of detail establishes the essential identity of Lailoken with the Myrddin of the *Avallenau*. Moreover, a considerable part of the account of Lailoken is very like what we find in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Vita Merlini*. Now, as we can hardly assume that the writer of the life of St. Kentigern invented the story out of nothing, we must believe that he used earlier material accessible as an oral tradition or in the form of a written narrative in prose or verse. The date (1164) of the oldest version of the life of Kentigern is, however, only about sixteen years later than that assigned to the *Vita Merlini*. Evidently, then, Geoffrey of Monmouth obtained access in some way to a life of St. Kentigern, with the accompanying account of Lailoken, and incorporated such features as served his purpose into his *Vita Merlini*. The variations in his poem from the story as it appears in the prose versions are what we might expect from a writer of Geoffrey's lively invention. The style of the earliest prose version, published by Mr. Ward in his article, suggests a Celtic origin.<sup>1</sup> Hence we may not improbably suppose that if Geoffrey's source was an oral tradition, he may have learned the story from some Welshman. The fact of chief interest, the identification of the historic Myrddin with Merlin Ambrosius, is brought out clearly by Mr. Ward.

"People had certainly begun to identify Lailoken [Myrddin or Merlin Silvester] with Merlin [Ambrosius] when the narrative in Titus A. xix. was written. It says of him: 'qui Lailoken vocabatur quem quidam dicunt fuisse Merlinum, qui erat Britonibus quasi propheta singularis, sed nescitur.' Again, Lailoken utters that prophecy about a triple death (in this case told of himself), which we regard as essentially Merlinesque, because we know it well in the French romance. And lastly, at the end of Part II., when it has been told

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Mr. Ward's note, p. 523.

how he was buried at Drumelzier in Tweeddale, 'in cuius campo lailoken tumulatus quiescit,' the following couplet is added :

‘ Sude perfossus, lapidem perpessus, et undam,  
Merlinus triplicem fertur inisse necem.’

In all other respects, Lailoken is very different indeed from the semi-daemon who attaches himself to the early kings of Britain. Kentigern describes him as a mere man, subject to cold and hunger, and liable to death. He is much more a madman than a prophet. He can never make the same statement twice over. No one pays much heed to his words until he has died the triple death he had prophesied ; and then a few of his other strange sayings are recalled to mind.” (p. 512.)

The most instructive lesson to be drawn from this long discussion is the diametrical opposition in opinion of those who have studied the question most carefully. The materials are, in my judgment, too scanty to allow us to affirm or to deny absolutely the existence of an earlier as well as a later Merlin. If the story of the boy without a father be a myth, we may yet suppose that the myth enclosed some small kernel of truth, even though we may not hope to discover what the exact truth is. If we adopt Mr. Skene's opinion, and assign the Chronicle of Nennius (or portions of it) to the seventh century, or take the more common view which refers it to the ninth century, we may well suppose the author to have been conversant with British traditions relating to the bard Myrddin. If the whole early account of the Enchanter Merlin be legendary, we have nothing to prove that the legend<sup>1</sup> existed as a whole before the birth of the historical Myrddin of the sixth century. If it be a later growth than the time of the real Myrddin, we need have no more difficulty with the mythical features than we have with the mythical Charlemagne

<sup>1</sup> I have elsewhere taken account of the possible oriental element in the account given by Nennius. See supplementary notes.

of the *Chanson de Roland*, or the mythical traits added to the character of Godefroid de Bouillon in the *Chanson du Chevalier au Cygne*.

My own belief is, that the only really historical personage is the Welsh bard Myrddin, while the Merlin of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Vita Merlini* is, as we have seen, the same personage with the addition of confusing details borrowed from the life of Merlin Ambrosius. I also incline to think that Merlin Ambrosius is for the most part legendary, but that what we actually know of him can scarcely be more uncertain. As for his name, Geoffrey borrowed the name *Ambrosius* from Nennius, and Merlin (Myrddin) from Welsh tradition. A slight amount of actual prophetic Welsh tradition, added to a much larger amount of prophecy concocted by Geoffrey himself, made up the book of Merlin's prophecies. I hardly think that Geoffrey of Monmouth knew at first-hand the Welsh poems which have come down to us. If he did, the use he made of them was exceedingly slight. On the other hand, if we suppose him to have got his acquaintance with Welsh legend mainly through oral tradition, we have little difficulty in accounting for the genesis of Merlin Ambrosius, and for the confusion of the two prophets in the *Vita Merlini*. We may suppose Geoffrey at first to have known vaguely of a Welsh bard or prophet, and to have heard the name of Merlin (Myrddin) connected with the story of a boy without a father. These slight hints were all that his active mind needed to enable him to string together the materials which floating tradition and his own imagination furnished him. Such, at any rate, is the conclusion gradually forced upon me in the progress of this investigation, but I should be glad to abandon this theory for one better grounded.

The question, then, stands very nearly where it did when we started; and it need not detain us much longer. We have found that Geoffrey of Monmouth was the first or among the first to

assert the identity of Merlin Ambrosius with Merlin (Myrddin) the Caledonian, and that Giraldus Cambrensis was the first to assert explicitly that Merlin Ambrosius was not the same as Merlin the Caledonian. Since the time of Giraldus we have discovered no important materials (unknown in his day), while we have probably lost much then extant; so that, in spite of our more critical methods, we can scarcely do more than to balance probabilities and to confess our ignorance. As for the Welsh poems, it appears probable that at least portions may be referred to the sixth century, and that a Welsh bard of the name of Myrddin actually existed. In the interval between the death of Myrddin and the time when the short chronicle of Nennius was committed to writing a tradition had arisen of a wonderful diviner. This tradition may have owed something to floating tales concerning Myrddin, even though his name may not have been uniformly associated with them all. During this intermediate stage of development the mythical element was first introduced, but how long the mythical features had existed cannot be definitely fixed. Yet we may be well-nigh certain that the essentially oriental motive in the story of the boy whose blood was to be sprinkled on the foundations of Vortigern's tower did not originate with Nennius. Exactly what is the origin of all the other features we may hardly presume to guess, but that some are Celtic seems not unlikely.

Of one thing, however, we may be certain: the Merlin of the French romances owed nothing directly to the Welsh poems that have come down to us, though floating Celtic legend contributed more than one striking element to the great prose cycle—notably the story of Nymiane. We must not expect perfect unity in the conception of the French romancers. In all probability the romancers had no critical knowledge of the legend, and would not have cared a straw whether their accounts of Merlin were confused or not. They contentedly

jumbled together elements which were perfect strangers to one another before they were violently incorporated into the original story. Throughout the romances we have no hint that more than one Merlin was known, so that, whether invention played a large part or not, we find a multitude of incidents bearing no analogy whatever to the known facts of the life of the Bard Myrddin. If, therefore, we assume two Merlins, we must admit that with one of them the French romances have little or nothing to do; if we assume but one Merlin (Myrddin), we must admit that his features have been altered almost beyond recognition. Confused the portrait of Merlin in the romances certainly is, in the sense that it groups together elements of very diverse character; but the portrait is not unharmonious, and by the very multiplicity of details it seems far more real to us than the shadowy figure outlined by the Welsh bards.

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## IX.

## NOTES ON THE SOURCES.

We are now prepared to look a little farther, and to trace some of the materials of which the romance is composed. The ultimate source of many of the incidents is sufficiently obscure; but of the romance as a whole we may say that it is a French superstructure, reared upon a Celtic foundation according to plans supplied by Geoffrey of Monmouth, but greatly modified by Robert de Borron and later romancers.



The setting of the story in the French romance is very different from that in Geoffrey of Monmouth; for in Robert de Borron's tale Merlin is the chief character, instead of the subordinate figure that we see in Geoffrey's *Historia*. Hence we find the romancer continually adding traits and incidents of which there is no hint in Nennius or Geoffrey. It is evident, therefore, that we cannot account for every line and paragraph, but that we must regard considerable portions as pure invention. The first six chapters of the French romance contain much material essentially the same as portions of Geoffrey's *Historia*. But this matter Robert probably got at second-hand, for there is no reason to think that he knew any language but his own. Yet we may well suppose that Robert was familiar, at least at second-hand, with floating Celtic tradition, and that he picked up from the lips of wandering singers and story-tellers more than one of the details of his romance. Some legends would unquestionably have come to his ears in that story-telling age; but just which of his materials were so derived is a matter of conjecture. Gaston Paris has argued strongly against Robert's familiarity with Latin,<sup>1</sup> and has urged that he got the leading features of the legend more or less directly from Wace<sup>2</sup> or other French translators of Geoffrey, and modified the outline according to his fading recollection of minor details, piecing out the story with his own inventions.

The following notes on the leading incidents make no pretence to be exhaustive, and they take little account of minor variations from Wace and Geoffrey of Monmouth.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Merlin*, Introd. pp. x.-xviii.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. P. Paris, *Romans de la Table Ronde*, i. p. 336.

<sup>3</sup> In tracing the sources I have freely availed myself of the investigations of Villemarqu , Paulin Paris, Gaston Paris, K lbing, Rh s, and others.

## THE MERLIN OF ROBERT DE BORRON.

1. *Council of Demons* (p. 1).

This was probably suggested by the Gospel of Nicodemus (chap. xvii.), which had been turned into French verse before Robert de Borron wrote.<sup>1</sup>

2. *Begetting of a Child by the agency of a Demon*<sup>2</sup> (p. 3).

This incident in its simple form is found in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Reg. Brit.* vi. 18; Wace, *Brut*, ll. 7623-7644. The belief in the existence of incubi seems to have been very general in the Middle Ages. Geoffrey himself refers to Apuleius, who gives a very singular account of the Demon of Socrates in the *Liber de deo Socratis*, but Apuleius has nothing to say of incubi. St. Augustine, in *De Civitate Dei*, xv. 23, mentions incubi under the name *dusii* or *drusii*—

“Et quoniam creberrima fama est, multique se expertos, vel ab eis qui experti essent, de quorum fide dubitandum non est, audisse confirmant, Silvanos, et Faunos, quos vulgo incubos vocant, improbos saepe exstitisse mulieribus, et earum appetisse ac peregissee concubitum; et quosdam daemones, quos Dusios Galli nuncupant, hanc assidue immunditiam et tentare et efficere, plures talesque asseverant ut hoc negare impudentiae videatur: non hinc aliquid audeo definire, utrum aliqui spiritus elemento aërio corporati (nam hoc elementum etiam cum agitur flabello, sensu corporis tactuque sentitus) possint etiam hanc pati libidinem, ut quomodo possunt sentientibus feminis misceantur.”

<sup>1</sup> G. Paris, *Merlin*, Introd. i. p. xii. Cf. *Trois versions rimées de l'Évangile de Nicodème*, Soc. des Anc. Textes, 1885. The Latin text has been edited by Tischendorf, *Evangelia Apocrypha*, Lipsiae, 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. G. Paris, *Merlin*, Introd. p. 13; and Drayton's *Polyolbion*, Works, vol. ii. p. 763 (note by Selden): “I shall not believe that other than true bodies on bodies can generate, except by swiftness of motion in conveying of stolen seed some unclean spirit might arrogate the improper name of generation.” Cf. also Alf. Maury, *La Magie et l'Astrologie au Moyen Âge*, p. 189, where the *deuce* is discussed. Very curious information on the entire subject of demons may be found in Jean Bodin's *Demonomanie*, Paris, 1580, and in Joh. Wier's *De Praestigiis daemonum et incantationibus ac veneficiis*, Basel, 1563.

When, in the course of the Middle Ages, the belief grew up that Antichrist<sup>1</sup> was to be born of a devil and a virgin, just as Christ was born of the Holy Ghost and a virgin, we see that the essential elements of the story, as we find it in the romance, were already at hand.<sup>2</sup>

Burton, in his *Anatomy of Melancholy*, Part III. sec. 2, mem. i. subs. 1, gives a considerable discussion of the intercourse of the Devil with women. For several other references see Dunlop's *Hist. of Fiction* (1888), i. p. 146, note; i. p. 156, note; ii. pp. 461, 462; Du Cange, *Glossarium*, art. *Incubi*; Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, i. pp. 189 and 193.

We may incidentally note that when Merlin reaches the age of twelve months he is uttering wise sayings. In the romance of *Kyng Alisaunder* (Morley's *English Writers*, iii. p. 297) we read of women in the East who bear but one child in their lives. "This child is able to begin talking to its mother as soon as it is born."

### 3. *The Punishment of being Buried Alive*

(p. 5) is that to which vestal virgins were condemned if unfaithful to their vows. Cf. also Dunlop's *Hist. of Fiction* (1888), i. p. 147, note.

### 4. *Sprinkling of Foundation with Blood* (pp. 23–28).

Nennius, *Hist. Brit.* 40, 42; Geoffrey, *Hist. Reg. Brit.* vi. 17. Also in Wace and other translators of Geoffrey. For other references see Dunlop's *Hist. of Fiction* (1888), i. p. 461.

<sup>1</sup> Wulfstan, *Homily xvi.*, *De temporibus Antichristi* (p. 95), has: "Crist is sōð god and sōð mann, and Antecrist bið sōðlice deofol and mann." See also Ebert *Allgem. Gesch. der Lit. des Mittelalters im Abendlande*, i. p. 97; iii. p. 480.

<sup>2</sup> Kölbing (*Altenglische Bibl.* iv. p. lxi.) points out interesting parallels between the mysterious origin of Merlin and that of Richard in the Romance of *Richard Coeur de Leon*, l. 207 sqq. The mother of Richard was, according to the romance, in league with the Devil, since she could not hear mass; and when compelled to hear it, she flew through the roof with her two children.

5. *The Hermit Blase* (p. 23).

Blase may be a mere invention, but Kölbing calls attention <sup>1</sup> to three passages in Lazamon's *Brut*, where a hermit is mentioned whom Merlin knows and visits. Lazamon translated (c. 1200) Wace, and made some additions, due in part, it may be, to oral tradition. Robert de Borron, of course, knew nothing of Lazamon, but the two writers might easily have stumbled upon the same popular story, preserved as a local tradition in more detail in one district than in another.<sup>2</sup>

6. *Vortigern and the Sons of Constance* (p. 24).

- (1) Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Hist.* vi. 5-9.
- (2) Wace, *Brut*, ll. 6585-6859.

7. *Vortigern's Tower, and the Boy without a Father* (pp. 27-31).

- (1) Nennius, *Hist.* 40, 41.
- (2) Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Hist.* vi. 17, 19.
- (3) Wace, *Brut*, ll. 7491-7710.

M. Gaster has shown that there are curious parallels between the early history of Merlin and several Jewish legends relating to the building of Solomon's Temple, which are told of Ashmedai and Ben Sira, and that these legends are at least as old as the eighth or ninth century.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Altenglische Bibl.* iv. p. cxii.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Scott F. Surtees, in a short study on *Merlin and Arthur* (E.E.T.S., 1871), identifies Blase with Lupus, but his theory is badly reasoned out. He even identifies Merlin with Germanus (see also p. xc., *ante*). We may admit that certain elements are borrowed from the lives of Lupus and Germanus without assuming identity. Paulin Paris thinks that Blase was introduced as a sort of excuse for the inventions of the romancer, and compares the hermit with the false Dares, Callisthenes, Turpin, etc.—*Romans de la Table Ronde*, ii. 32, 33.

<sup>3</sup> Kölbing, *Altenglische Bibl.* iv. p. cvi. Mr. Ward, of the British Museum, in calling my attention in conversation (April 22, 1890) to this same matter, suggested that the similarity of incident is not due to borrowing, but rather to the fact that the conception had become common property. As early as 1836, F. Michel, *Vita Merlini* (Introd. p. lxxi.) pointed out the oriental element in this

8. *Merlin's bursts of Laughter on going to Vortigern* (pp. 33, 34).

Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Vita Merlini*, ll. 490–532.

The setting of these two incidents is, of course, very different in the prose romance and in the *Vita Merlini*. In the poem, Merlin laughs at a beggar who has a concealed treasure, and at a young fellow with a pair of new shoes, who will soon be drowned. The incident of the shoes appears to have been a widely diffused mediaeval legend; and there is good ground for thinking that Robert de Borron did not get it from the *Vita Merlini*.

Without insisting on Robert's ignorance of Latin, we may note that there are in the *Vita Merlini* two instances of Merlin's knowledge, which, as G. Paris remarks,<sup>1</sup> are not less piquant than those here given, and which we might, perhaps, expect Robert to reproduce, but with which he seems not to have been acquainted. The evidence is, however, negative, and should not be pressed too far. Gaston Paris refers to the Hebrew legend of the Talmud, and calls attention to the similarity of the story related of the demon Ashmedai, who was brought before Solomon.<sup>2</sup>

The story of the priest chanting at the head of the funeral procession, in which was borne a dead child that was really the priest's own son, is found in a modified form in Straparola's

incident as found in "The History of the Temple of Jerusalem"—translated from the Arabic MS. of Imam Jalal-Addin al Siuti, with notes and dissertations, by the Rev. James Reynolds, B.A. Lond., 1836, 8vo. Here, too, is a parallel to Merlin's bursts of laughter.

<sup>1</sup> *Merlin*, Intro. i. p. xv.

<sup>2</sup> For a further account of the history of this legend, see M. Gaster's *Jewish Sources of and Parallels to the Early English Metrical Legends of King Arthur and Merlin*, Lond., 1887. Gaster also gives (*Feuilleton-Zeitung*, No. 299, Berlin, March 26, 1890) a Rumanian legend (quoted by Kölbing) of the Archangel Gabriel and a hermit, in which the same motive recurs. Kölbing points out that the Italian version of *Merlin* varies somewhat the account of the churl and the shoes. *Altenglische Bibl.* iv. p. cxi. note.

*Tredecim Piacevoli Notte* (Venice, 1550). Gaston Paris remarks<sup>1</sup> that the tale probably came to Robert de Borron as one of the floating oral traditions on the *devinaillies* of Merlin.<sup>2</sup>

9. *The Fight of the Dragons, and the Interpretation* (pp. 38–40).

(1) Nennius, *Hist.* 42.

(2) Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Hist.* vii. 3, 4; viii. 1.

(3) Wace, *Brut*, ll. 7711–7776.

Wace omits the interpretation by Geoffrey of Monmouth, though he gives the prediction of the death of Vortigern. The interpretation in the prose romance of *Merlin* is different from that in Geoffrey's *Historia*. For instance, in Geoffrey's account the red dragon betokens the British nation, while the white dragon denotes the Saxons. In the romance the red dragon signifies Vortigern, and the white dragon typifies the two sons of Constance. As Robert de Borron cannot have got his interpretation from either Geoffrey or Wace, he must have either invented it or had access to oral or written sources unknown to us.<sup>3</sup>

10. *Death of Vortigern* (p. 42).

(1) Nennius, *Hist.* 47, 48.

(2) Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Hist.* viii. 2.

(3) Wace, *Brut*, ll. 7777–7848.

The *Merlin* strangely confuses the original account. According to Geoffrey of Monmouth, the three sons of *Constantine* were Constance, who became a monk, Aurelius, and Uter-Pendragon; while in the romance we read (p. 24) of a king Constance who

<sup>1</sup> *Merlin*, Intro. p. xv.

<sup>2</sup> We may note that the mother of the judge (p. 20) had got her boy with a priest. Cf. p. 34 of the English version.

<sup>3</sup> The tale of Llud and Llevelis in the *Mabinogion* (vol. iii.) contains the story of the two dragons—the white and the red—much the same as in Nennius and Geoffrey of Monmouth. Cf. p. c., *ante*.

“hadde thre sones, the first hight Moyne [that is, a monk], and the tother Pendragon, and the thirde Vter.”<sup>1</sup>

11. *Merlin's Prophecy of the Threefold Death of a Baron* (p. 51).

*Vita Merlini*, ll. 310–321 ; ll. 391–417.

In the *Vita* it is a page whose death is prophesied, and it is the queen who disguises him as a woman. G. Paris suggests<sup>2</sup> that Robert de Borron probably got the story indirectly. The different setting seems due to Robert's own invention.

12. *Merlin brings from Ireland the Stones of Stonehenge* (p. 58).

(1) Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Hist.* viii. 10, 11, 12.

(2) Wace, *Brut*, ll. 8207–8386.

The circumstances and the purpose are very different in the romance from what is related in the earlier accounts. In Geoffrey's *Historia* the stones are brought over because of their healing properties while Aurelius is living. In the romance Uter sets them up on Salisbury Plain as a monument to his brother Pendragon.<sup>3</sup>

13. *Founding of the Round Table* (p. 59).

Wace, *Brut*, ll. 9994–10,005.

As already remarked, no allusion to the Round Table is made by Geoffrey, though there is reason to suppose that the legend is much older than his *Historia*.<sup>4</sup> In the references to the Round Table in the *Merlin* there is some confusion.<sup>5</sup> Wace tells us Arthur founded the Round Table; while the *Merlin* (p. 60)

<sup>1</sup> Cf. G. Paris, *Merlin*, Intro. p. x.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. xvi. Cf. P. Paris, *Romans de la Table Ronde*, ii. p. 56; Villemarqué, *Myrddhin*, p. 125.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. P. Paris, *Romans*, ii. 58.

<sup>4</sup> But see P. Paris, *Romans de la Table Ronde*, ii. pp. 64, 65.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. G. Paris, *Merlin*, Intro. i. p. xvi.

says that it was founded by Uter-Pendragon.<sup>1</sup> Merlin tells the king the story of the table at which Christ had sat, and of the table which Joseph of Arimathea was commanded to make. The third was to be established by the king in the name of the Trinity, and was to have a void place for the knight yet unborn who should bring to an end the adventures of the Holy Grail. This is one of the not infrequent points of contact in our romance of the Grail legends and those of Merlin, though, of course, originally independent.<sup>2</sup>

14. *Amour of Uter-Pendragon with Ygerne* (pp. 63–78).

(1) Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Hist.* viii. 19, 20.

(2) Wace, *Brut*,<sup>3</sup> ll. 8803–9058.

As we might expect, the variations here introduced by Robert de Borron are considerable, but we cannot take space

<sup>1</sup> For additional references on the Round Table see Dunlop's *Hist. of Fiction* (1888), i. p. 151, note; ii. p. 456. "It would be interesting to understand the signification of the term Round Table. On the whole, it is the table, probably, and not its roundness that is the fact to which to call attention, as it possibly means that Arthur's court was the first early court where those present sat at a table at all in Britain. No such thing as a common table figures at Conchobar's Court or any other described in the old legends of Ireland, and the same applies, we believe, to those of the old Norsemen. The attribution to Arthur of the first use of a common table would fit in well with the character of a Culture Hero, which we have ventured to ascribe to him, and it derives countenance from the pretended history of the Round Table; for the Arthurian legend traces it back to Arthur's father, Uthr Bendragon, in whom we have, under one of his many names, the king of Hades, the realm whence all culture was fabled to have been derived. In a wider sense, the Round Table possibly signified plenty or abundance, and might be compared with the Table of the Ethiopians, at which Zeus and the other gods of Greek mythology used to feast from time to time."—J. Rhys, *Studies in the Arthurian Legend*, pp. 9, 10.

<sup>2</sup> On the origin of the *Holy Grail* see Rhys's *Studies*, ch. xiii., also p. 170 *sqq.*; and Nutt's *Studies on the Legend of the Holy Grail*.

<sup>3</sup> G. Paris remarks that Wace omits the name Gorlois, and that Robert de Borron does the same. Yet Wace at least once mentions Gorlois under the name—"Gornois un quens Cornvalois," l. 8689; "Li quens de Cornuaille," l. 8798; "Que li quens a de Cornuaille," l. 8937. Robert of Brunne, translating Wace, does the same:

"þe Erl of Cornewaille was o þat hyl;

Gorlens he highte, a man of skyl."

ll. 9207, 9208.



for pointing them out. The ultimate source of this story is difficult to determine. It has been compared with the story of David and Uriah, and with the tale of Amphitryon in Ovid.<sup>1</sup> Possibly Geoffrey's biblical or classical reading helped him to a hint; but not improbably the underlying idea had become common property, and need not be referred to any definite source.

As for the frequent metamorphoses of Merlin throughout the romance, they are not essentially different from the metamorphoses of the old mythologies—Proteus, Vertumnus, etc. We need not, therefore, take especial account of the passages where Merlin appears as a blind cripple (p. 73), etc. But we may note that transformations of all sorts are very common in Celtic stories.<sup>2</sup>

15. *Uter-Pendragon's*<sup>3</sup> *Battles, and his Death* (pp. 92–95).

(1) Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Hist.* viii. 18, 21–24.

(2) Wace, *Brut*, ll. 9059–9238.

Of course the details of the battles differ in the romance, and in Geoffrey and Wace; but it is a little remarkable that Robert tells us that Pendragon (who in the romance takes the place of the Aurelius Ambrosius of Geoffrey) was killed in the battle of Salisbury (p. 56), while Geoffrey (viii. 14), as well as Wace, says that Pendragon was poisoned, and that Uter afterwards met a similar fate (viii. 24). Our romance has no account of the poisoning, and agrees with Geoffrey (viii. 22) and Wace only in making Uter suffer a long illness, so that he has to be borne in a horse-litter.

We are not obliged to suppose the dragon standard of Uter

<sup>1</sup> Cf. P. Paris, *Romans de la Table Ronde*, ii. p. 81.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. e.g. the *Mabinogi* of Manawyddan, Rhys, *Studies*, p. 290; P. Paris, *Romans*, i. 16.

<sup>3</sup> For the Celtic Uter-Pendragon see Rhys, *Studies*, p. 256. Cf. also Nutt, *Studies on the Legend of the Holy Grail*, Index I.

the invention of the romancer. Such a standard was used in war by the Dacians and by the Roman emperors after Constantine. A dragon was the standard of Wessex; so, too, in the public processions of the Pope, the image of a dragon under the cross was borne at the end of a lance by *Draconarii*, a name also given to the bearers of the dragon banner of the Roman emperors.<sup>1</sup>

### 16. *Coronation of Arthur*<sup>2</sup> (pp. 95-107).

Geoffrey (*Hist.* ix. 1) and his translator Wace agree in their account of the boy Arthur. The crown is set upon his head by the Archbishop Dubricius<sup>3</sup> at the request of the nobles, because of the increasing numbers of the Saxons. The birth of Arthur (viii. 20) is no mystery. In the romance, on the other hand, the barons know nothing of Arthur till he takes the sword out of the anvil in the presence of the people. This incident of the sword is referred by G. Paris<sup>4</sup> to biblical legends; and it recurs in various forms in the literature of the Middle Ages.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Brockhaus, *Conversations-Lexicon*, Art. *Drache*; Dunlop, *Hist. of Fiction* (1888), i. p. 126, note; ii. pp. 449-456.

<sup>2</sup> For a discussion of "Arthur, historical and mythical," see Rhys, *Studies*, ch. i., especially the summary, p. 47.

<sup>3</sup> In the English prose version the name of the archbishop is not given, though in *Arthur and Merlin* (ed. Kölbing), l. 2783, we find "bishop Brice" mentioned, and I have found the name in several of the French MSS. of the prose *Merlin*. In Geoffrey's *Historia* it appears, viii. 12; ix. 1, 4, 12, 13, 15.

<sup>4</sup> *Merlin*, Introd. p. xx. Cf. also P. Paris, *Romans de la Table Ronde*, i. 234. Essentially the same incident appears in the *Quête du Graal*, where Lancelot refuses to make the attempt to draw it out, "persuaded that this honour was reserved for the most perfect of knights."—P. Paris, *Romans*, v. p. 330. In *Kyng Alisaunder*, l. 2625 *eqq.*, the prince draws out of the ground a spear. Cf. Kölbing, *Altenglische Bibl.* p. lxi. In the *Völsunga Saga*, cap. iii., Sigmund, son of King Völsung, pulls out of the Branstock the sword at which all others had vainly tugged, and wins it for himself. This sword was the gift of Odin. For an additional reference see Dunlop's *Hist. of Fiction* (1888), i. p. 153, note. For notes on magic swords and spears see W. A. Clouston's remarks "On the Magical Elements in Chaucer's *Squire's Tale*," Chaucer Soc., pub. 1889, part ii. pp. 372-381.

# THE BOOK OF ARTHUR.

We have seen in our examination of the manuscripts that there are several continuations of the original romance of Robert de Borron. One of these continuations is the basis of the second part (pp. 108-699) of our English translation. It remains to discuss briefly the sources of this continuation—the so-called *Book of Arthur*.<sup>1</sup> The study of the manuscripts has thrown light on the way in which the romance was built up piece by piece, but of the origin of the materials the manuscripts tell us nothing.

The study of the sources belongs rather to French scholars than to English; for the investigation demands a minute comparison of the other French Arthurian romances yet unpublished. A large number of questions, too, must be relegated to the Celtic philologist, who must determine the origin of the various groups of personal and local names. Numerous special investigations, with the help of critical texts, must precede the solution of these and other problems. But we must not overlook the fact that many of the elements of the continuation are invented, or at least selected from the common stock of material that lay ready for any romancer who chose to use it, and can be traced to no definite source. Padding of this sort we may pass by without extended remark. In our discussion we can perhaps best take up the chapters in their order, and bestow a few words on the sources of the leading incidents. The great extent of the romance forbids us to touch any but the more important matters, and those only lightly. In many instances the notes scarcely attempt more than to indicate what the questions are.

<sup>1</sup> The author (or authors) of the *Book of Arthur* is unknown. Paulin Paris suggests that he may be the same as the writer of the *Saint-Graal*; but this is a mere conjecture.

The short narrative of Robert de Borron had utilized nearly all that the literature before his time had to tell of the wonder-working Merlin; but the story had quickened the invention of more than one writer. In the recital of Geoffrey of Monmouth, Merlin disappears from view after the adventure of Uter and Ygerne.<sup>1</sup> Robert makes Merlin figure also at the coronation of Arthur.

But after the conception of a diviner and magician was once given, nothing was easier for the romancers who continued Robert's work than to introduce Merlin at all suitable emergencies into the further history of Arthur. This plan involved piecing together in confusing and almost overwhelming detail a congeries of legends and recitals which must have been originally distinct, and in their elements far earlier than the time when the romance was written. Yet out of the confusion stands the outline of a few great events. The rough sketch is furnished by Geoffrey's *Historia*, but in the hands of the romancers this is expanded both by free invention and the insertion of borrowed legends.<sup>2</sup> In the continuation we trace the several narratives running at times side by side, but separate, and at other times tangled together:—

1. The revolt of the seven kings occupies a considerable portion of the romance (pp. 108–599).

2. The wars with the Saxons, which had already begun in the time of Uter, are directed against both Arthur and the kings revolted from him, and ultimately compel the rebels to make common cause with Arthur.

<sup>1</sup> There occur later two mere references to him—*Hist.* xii. 17, 18.

<sup>2</sup> Omissions and changes of all sorts occur. In Geoffrey (ix. 1) there is no revolt against Arthur immediately after his coronation. Hoel of Armorica sends help to Arthur against the Saxons (ix. 2). Cheldric is not mentioned in the romance. In Geoffrey (ix. 9) Lot, Urian, and Augusel are brothers. Guanhamara is of Roman descent, and educated under Duke Cadur. Arthur's remote conquests (ix. 10, 11) are not reproduced in the romance. Arthur's marriage (ix. 9) occurs in Geoffrey after the defeat of the Saxons, and his coronation after the war with the Romans.

3. The war of King Leodegan with King Rion, and the marriage of Arthur with Gonnore, are more or less of a break in the continuity of the narrative; though, where all is so loosely put together, one may hesitate to determine what is principal and what subordinate.

4. The war with the Romans (p. 639 *sqq.*) is merely supplementary, and not strictly an integral part of the narrative.

5. Along with these larger divisions of the narrative are legends of Merlin, of Nimiane, of Gawain, and others. A slight attempt at unity is made by introducing at intervals the hermit Blase, to whom Merlin relates all that has happened; but this device is crude, and has no advantage further than that it allows Merlin now and then to recapitulate a portion of the story.

## CHAPTER VII.

This chapter appears to be for the most part a patchwork of commonplace incidents, though many of the materials are old. The thought of holding a grand court after Arthur's coronation is evidently borrowed, with much modification, from Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia*, ix. 12. But Geoffrey says that Arthur held his court at Pentecost, while the romance (p. 108) places it after the middle of August. On the other hand, Robert de Borron<sup>1</sup> agrees with Geoffrey in making the coronation occur at Pentecost. Of the names here introduced, three at least are taken from Geoffrey, viz. Loth, Urien, Aguysas, though with slight changes of form. Prof. Rhys points out<sup>2</sup> that these and other names here found are Celtic. Urien is the subject of eight poems in the *Book of Taliessin*.<sup>3</sup> Ventres (Nentre of Garlot),<sup>4</sup> Ydiers

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 107 of the *Merlin*.

<sup>2</sup> *Studies in the Arthurian Legend*, chap xi., "Urien and his Congeners."

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 259.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 323.

(Edern, son of Nûd), Carados, Benbras (Brebras),<sup>1</sup> are easily identified in Celtic legend.

In Geoffrey's account there is no revolt, but the rebellion is naturally enough suggested by the circumstances of Arthur's birth as detailed in the *Merlin* of Robert de Borron, and could be easily invented with the attendant features. Apart from the references to King Leodegan and his war with King Rion, to both of whom we shall recur later, the remainder of the chapter is taken up with the commonplace description of a battle of the Middle Ages. The dragon standard has already been commented upon.

### CHAPTER VIII.

This chapter is occupied with the mission of Ulfin and Bretel to King Ban and King Bors. We have a résumé (p. 121) of a part of Robert de Borron's *Merlin*, and an account of the children of Ygerne, different from that given on p. 86 of the romance.

On turning to Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia*, ix. 2, we learn that ambassadors are sent into Armorica to get the help of King Hoel, Arthur's sister's son, against the Saxons; and he provides 15,000 men. In the romance, Ulfin and Bretel, who had already figured in Robert de Borron's *Merlin*, go to Armorica (or Little Britain) for the help of King Ban of Benoyk<sup>2</sup> and King Bors of Gannes. These are both identified<sup>3</sup> by Prof. Rhÿs with characters in Celtic literature. "The identity of Ban or Pan with Uthr Ben or Uthr Pen-dragon is shown by his name, and the story of his dying immediately after drinking from a certain well (p. 127). This has its counterpart in Geoffrey's account (viii. 24) of Uthr Pendragon's

<sup>1</sup> Rhÿs, *Studies in the Arthurian Legend*, p. 172.

<sup>2</sup> On Benoyk (Benoic) see *ibid.* p. 304.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 161, 162.

death in consequence of his foes having poisoned the well he was wont to drink from. Thus Bors readily falls into his place as Ambrosius or Emrys, brother to Uthr Ben, especially as the two are described by Geoffrey as exiles in France, whence they are invited to come over to take possession of this country against Vortigern and his allies. But under the name Ambrosius or Emrys were confounded the historical Aurelius Ambrosius and the mythic Merlin Ambrosius, in whom we appear to have the Celtic Zeus in one of his many forms." Bors is "the same person called Bort in the Welsh Triads, for, besides the similarity of the name, Bors, like Bort, was one of those who found the Holy Grail."<sup>1</sup> Ban and Bors are warred upon in their own realm by King Claudas de la deserte, in whom Paulin Paris<sup>2</sup> thought he could recognize Clovis, King of the Franks, or Clotaire I., his successor. "Nam Britanni sub Francorum potestate fuerunt post obitum regis Chlodowei, et comites non reges appellati sunt." (Greg. Tur. iv. 3, A.D. 549.)

The other incidents of the chapter relate to the adventures of Ulfín and Bretel, and are plainly invented.

## CHAPTER IX.

1. Most of this chapter appears to demand no especial source, as it is largely taken up with the details of Arthur's first great tournament; but there seems little reason to doubt that the original suggestion of this feature came from Geoffrey's *Historia*, ix. 13, 14.

2. The interesting detail with regard to Kay that he was hated because of his surly tongue, and that this was due to his having been nursed by a woman of lower rank than his

<sup>1</sup> Rhys, p. 161. For the part that Ban and Bors play in the legends of the Grail, see Nutt's *Studies on the Legend of the Holy Grail*, Index I.

<sup>2</sup> *Romans de la Table Ronde*, ii. 109.

mother (p. 135), is shown by Gaston Paris to point to a widespread superstition of the Middle Ages.<sup>1</sup>

3. Towards the end of the chapter, Guynebens, the brother of Ban and Bors, is mentioned (pp. 138–140) as a great clerk whom Merlin teaches many things. What use the young fellow makes of his knowledge we shall see later (*Merlin*, p. 361). Now in Geoffrey's *Historia*, v. 16, a certain Guanius joins with Melga in slaying Ursula and the eleven thousand virgins. According to Rhys,<sup>2</sup> "The Welsh versions usually have Melwas and Gwynwas: it is the latter name also, probably, that meets us in Malory's Gwinas, i. 15, and Gwenbaus, brother to Ban and Bors, i. 11."

4. At the end of this chapter we have the words (p. 131)—  
 "But now cesseth the tale of hem, and returneth to speke of kyng Arthur, that is lefte at Logres." This is one of the very numerous instances in the second branch of the *Merlin* of this kind of transition. Paulin Paris finds<sup>3</sup> in these *laissez* an additional proof of the dual authorship of the romance, for nothing of the sort appears in the prose redaction of the *Joseph of Arimathea* or in the first branch of the *Merlin*, although so common in the second branch (pp. 108–699) and in the *Saint-Graal*.

## CHAPTER X.

1. The greater portion of the details of the battle of Bredigan is, of course, pure invention, though the legend of the battle itself may have some more substantial basis. This battle parallels the earlier one of Arthur with the rebel kings.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Merlin*, Introd. I. p. xxi.

<sup>2</sup> *Studies*, p. 343, note.

<sup>3</sup> *Romans de la Table Ronde*, ii. 160.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. P. Paris, *Romans de la Table Ronde*, ii. 124.



2. The entrusting of a ring to Merlin, which he is to show as a token to Leonces de Paerne (p. 143), is a very familiar motive, much older than the romance.

3. Merlin's account of King Rion and of Leodegan and his daughter Gonnore (p. 114) is repeated (p. 141) in much the same terms, with some additional touches. The discussion of this matter, however, belongs more properly to chap. xiv., and later.

### CHAPTER XI.

For the two chief incidents here detailed I can cite no specific source. The transformations of Merlin may be compared with those recounted by Geoffrey of Monmouth. The poetic glamour in the story of the great churl coming through the meadows, with his bow and arrows, and his coat and hood of russet, seems to suggest some other source than the invention of the French romancer, but I have hit upon nothing precisely the same. Cf. Malory's *Morte Darthur*, book i. chap. xvii.

### CHAPTERS XII, XIII.

1. In these chapters we have a prolix account of the return of the Saxons, and of their ravages in Britain. Much of the geography is fantastic, and cannot be explained. But several of the place-names, though strangely disguised, probably represent actual localities.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I cannot take space for details, but refer the reader to Prof. Rhys's *Studies in the Arthurian Legend*, Index. See also J. S. Stuart Glennie's *Essay on Arthurian Localities* (E.E.T.S. No. 36), and the index of place-names to Malory's *Morte Darthur* (ed. Sommer), vol. ii. The conclusion of P. Paris on this matter is as follows: "Tout ce qu'on peut donc assurer, c'est que la scène des récits qui touchent à la France embrasse la Touraine, l'Anjou, la Poitou, la Marche, la Bretagne, une partie de l'Auvergne, et de la basse Bourgogne" (*Romans*, ii. 111). Trebes is Trèves, on the borders of Benoyk and Berry. Benoyk is Vannes. "La terre deserte est le Berry, dont la capitale est Bourges et le roi Claudas" (ii. 110, 111). Cf. also Dunlop's *Hist. of Fiction* (1888), i. 198, note.

2. The account of the begetting of Mordred (pp. 180, 181) is variously told in the romances,<sup>1</sup> and in Geoffrey's *Historia*, ix. 9. Geoffrey calls him Arthur's nephew and Lot's son, and seems to know nothing of Arthur's incest with his sister. But the basis of the whole story of Mordred is certainly Celtic, and this ugly feature is doubtless a part of the original myth.<sup>2</sup>

3. The account of Gawain's conversation with his mother (p. 185 *sqq.*) may be compared with that of Ewein and his mother (p. 241), the second being evidently a mere variant of the first. The singular detail with regard to the waxing and waning of Gawain's strength (p. 182) is touched upon by Prof. Rhys,<sup>3</sup> who finds in it evidence for regarding Gawain as a solar hero.

4. The enchantress Carnile, who is here mentioned (p. 185) along with Morgain and Nimiane, is evidently to be referred to the same mythical sources with them.

## CHAPTER XIV.

1. The entire story of the relations of Arthur with Gonnore has been greatly embellished by the romancers, with the result that no two accounts precisely agree. In Geoffrey's *Historia* there are but three references to Guanhumara, and of these the first only (ix. 9) is important for our immediate purpose. There she is said to have belonged to a noble Roman family, to have been educated under Duke Cadur, and to have excelled in beauty all other women in the island. Geoffrey's whole

<sup>1</sup> Cf. P. Paris, *Romans de la Table Ronde*, ii. p. 105 *sqq.*; G. Paris, *Merlin*, Introd. i. p. xl. *sqq.*

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Rhys, *Studies*, p. 20 *sqq.* and the index. Also Dunlop's *Hist. of Fiction* (1888), i. p. 183, note; ii. p. 220, note. On the "black cross" mentioned on p. 181 of the romance, see P. Paris, *Romans*, i. 302.

<sup>3</sup> *Studies in the Arthurian Legend*, p. 14. Cf. also Malory's *Morte Darthur*, iv. 18; vii. 15, 17; xviii. 3; xx. 21. For Gawain's part in the story of the Grail, see Nutt's *Studies*, Index I.

account of Guanhumara tallies hardly at all with the account in the *Book of Arthur* and in the other romances, to say nothing of the Celtic sources.<sup>1</sup>

2. As for Leodegan, I can throw no light on the origin of the story of his wars with Rion. Malory touches lightly upon Leodegan (i. 17, 18; iii. 1), but tells us little about the conflicts with Rion. Still, both Leodegan and Rion play too large a part in the romances to allow us to count them as mere figments of the imagination. With Rion is connected the old story of the mantle fringed with beards. The essential outlines of this incident are found in Geoffrey's *Historia*, x. 3, where Arthur, after overcoming the giant of Mt. St. Michel, says that he had found none so strong since he had killed the giant Ritho on Mt. Aravius. In our romance (p. 649) we read that "neuer hadde thei seyn so grete a feende," and on p. 649 we find no mention of Ritho. Malory also omits the name, and makes Arthur say: "This was the fyerst gyaunt that euer I mette with / saue one in the mount of Arabe / whiche I ouercame / but this was gretter and fyerser" (*Le Morte Darthur*, v. 5).

Ritho had made furs for himself of the beards of the kings he had killed, and he offered to give Arthur's beard the most prominent place. We have in our romance two accounts<sup>2</sup> of this mantle, with characteristic differences. In the first (p. 115), we are told that Rion had conquered twenty crowned kings, and made a mantle of their beards, and that he had sworn not to cease till he had conquered thirty kings. According to the second account (pp. 619, 620), he had flayed off the beards of nine kings, and he now wanted Arthur's beard for

<sup>1</sup> For some account of the Celtic sources see Rhys, *Studies in the Arthurian Legend*, ch. ii., especially p. 38, and the whole of ch. iii., "Gwenhwyvar and her Captors."

<sup>2</sup> At the beginning of the French romance *Li Chevaliers as deus espes* occurs the incident of the demanding of Arthur's beard by King Ris. Cf. also *Lajamon* (ed. Madden), iii. p. 398.

the tassels. In Geoffrey, Ritho is a giant; and in our romance Rion is called "kyнге of the londe of Geauntes and of the londe of .pastures" (p. 114). Later, he is called king of Ireland (pp. 175, 208); king of Denmark and Ireland (p. 228); king of "Denmarke and Islonde" (p. 327); king of the Isles (p. 619); and lord of all the west (p. 620).

In the romance of *Arthur*, as outlined by Dunlop (*Hist. of Fiction*, 1888, vol. i. p. 224), we read that Laodogant "had been attacked by King Ryon, a man of a disposition so malevolent that he had formed to himself a project of possessing a mantle furred with the beards of those kings he should conquer. He had calculated with the grand-master of his wardrobe that a full royal cloak would require forty beards: he had already vanquished five kings, and reckoned on a sixth beard from the chin of Laodogant. Arthur and his knights totally deranged this calculation by defeating King Ryon. Laodogant, in return for the assistance he had received, offered his daughter, the celebrated Geneura, in marriage to Arthur. Merlin, however, who does not appear to have been a flattering courtier, and who does not seem to have attached to the conservation of Laodogant's beard the importance that it merited, declared that his master must first deserve the princess."

San-Marte pointed out a Celtic legend in which King Rion and his mantle are referred to.<sup>1</sup>

3. Most of the other incidents of the chapter are evident inventions or combinations. The details of the battles are much the same throughout the romance, and call for no especial attention. The second Gonnore seems to be a mere variant of the first, and to owe her existence to the ingenuity of the romancer.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Beiträge zur bretonischen . . . Heldensage*, p. 60. For the rôle of Rion in the Huth *Merlin* see G. Paris, *Introd.* i. p. lxvi.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. also P. Paris, *Romans de la Table Ronde*, ii. 141.

It may, perhaps, be going too far to see in the substitution of the false Gonnore for the queen a recollection of the legend of Charlemagne's mother, Berte, whose place was usurped, as the story goes, by her servant Aliste; but there is considerable similarity in the two accounts. (Cf. L. Gautier, *Chanson de Roland*, p. 357; Dunlop's *Hist. of Fiction*, revised edition, ii. p. 446.)

4. By the reference to the Holy Grail (p. 229) we are taken into another cycle of legend; while the introduction of the nephew of the Emperor of Constantinople (p. 230, cf. p. 186) is one of several proofs of the influence of oriental material on our romance.<sup>1</sup> This young man figures in many other Arthurian romances.

#### CHAPTER XV.

For this chapter we can scarcely hope to find a definite source. The actual wars with the Saxons doubtless gave rise to Celtic traditions which were handed on with endless permutations of essentially the same incidents; but the general similarity of the various battles warns us not to look for the source of more than an occasional name or incident.<sup>2</sup>

#### CHAPTERS XVI., XVII., XVIII.

In these chapters we find a host of easily manufactured incidents, of which I can cite but a few. Seigramor is again brought in (p. 259), but no especially striking motive is introduced. On p. 262 *sqq.* Merlin appears in the guise of an old man. This transformation may be compared with that in Robert de Borron's *Merlin* (p. 72). On p. 263, the old man calls Gawain a coward. The same incident in another

<sup>1</sup> For the Saigremors who appears in Chrestien's *Conte du Graal* and in other legends of the *Grail*, see Nutt's *Studies*, Index I.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the conversation of Ewein with that of Gawain in chap. xii.

form reappears a little later (p. 297). Other parallels suggest themselves, as, for example, p. 279, where Merlin appears disguised as a churl, much the same as on p. 167.

## CHAPTER XIX.

1. In this chapter the romancer doubtless makes use of older materials, considerably modified to suit his needs. The prophecies (p. 304 *sqq.*) seem to have been suggested by the similar prophecies of Geoffrey's *Historia*, book vii.

2. The meeting of Merlin and Nimiane is here detailed in a form that does not recur in the other romances. As is well known, Malory (iv. 1) identifies the maiden whom Merlin loved with one of the ladies of the lake. Her name appears in various forms, easily explicable when one takes account of the confusion in the MSS. of the letters *u* and *n* and *m*. The original Celtic character underwent a variety of transformations at the hands of the romancers, who combined and differentiated the original legends with little regard for consistency. We may be somewhat surprised to find Rhÿs identifying Nimiane with Morgain le Fee, but of the justice of this there can be little question.<sup>1</sup>

As for the wonders<sup>2</sup> that Merlin performs before Nimiane,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. G. Paris, *Merlin*, Introd. p. lxx. Rhÿs, *Studies in the Arthurian Legend*, pp. 284, 348, compares Nimiane with Rhiannon, wife of Pwyll. Cf. also Nutt's *Studies on the Legend of the Holy Grail*, p. 232, my discussion of the *Vita Merlini*, and Sommer's *Morte Darthur*, vol. iii. p. 117 *sqq.* Cf. also Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie* (4th ed.), pp. 342, 533, 685; n. 117, 128; Dunlop's *Hist. of Fiction* (1888), i. 186, note.

<sup>2</sup> "Manni, in his *Ist. del Decam.* ii. 97, cites an anonymous MS. where it is said that Boccaccio's story [of a garden produced by enchantment: *Decam. Giorn. x.*] is found in a collection much older than his time, and adds that Giovanni Tritemio relates how a Jewish physician, in the year 876, caused by enchantment a splendid garden to appear, with trees and flowers in full bloom, in mid-winter. A similar exploit is credited to Albertus Magnus in the thirteenth century. The notion seems to have been brought to Europe from the East, where stories of saints, dervishes, or jogis performing such wonders have been common time out of mind."—*Originals and Analogues of some of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales*, part iv. (1886), p. 332, note.

they belong to the familiar tricks of the mediaeval 'tregetours,' referred to by Chaucer in the *House of Fame*, book iii., and in the *Frankeleyns Tale*.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER XX.

1. This chapter affords scarcely any really new material; for the interminable details of the hand-to-hand conflicts are essentially repetitions, with slight increment, of the details of the preceding battles.

2. Merlin's prophecies here deserve as little attention as the prophecies of the preceding chapter. Guyomar is a disguised form of "Guigemar for Guihomarc[h]us."<sup>2</sup> He is here introduced (p. 316) for the first time, but he reappears later in the story (p. 507 *sqq.*).

3. The account of Nascien (pp. 326, 327) borrows hints from the Grail legend.<sup>3</sup>

4. Merlin's enchantments are of a piece with those in the previous battles. The pretty little scene where Gonnore arms her lover Arthur (pp. 322, 323) is probably the invention of the romancer; as is also the scene where King Leodegan falls on his knee before his steward Cleodalis, and asks pardon for the wrongs he has committed against him.

## CHAPTER XXI.

1. The chapter opens with the enchantments of Guynebens (pp. 361-363), which are essentially the same as those of Merlin<sup>4</sup> (p. 309). Here, as elsewhere, the romancer returns several times upon his tracks.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. also Warton's *Hist. of Eng. Poetry*, sec. xv.

<sup>2</sup> Rhys, *Studies*, p. 394.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *ibid.* pp. 320-322; Nutt, *Studies on the Legend of the Holy Grail*, Index I.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. P. Paris, *Romans de la Table Ronde*, ii. 199. These marvels do not differ widely from those which an old man recounts to Lancelot after he has left the Château des Mares and gone to the Forêt Perdue (*ibid.* v. 311).

2. A considerable part of the chapter is devoted to the invented details of battles; but the finding of the treasure (p. 370), and the meeting of Arthur with Gawain and the children (p. 371 *sqq.*), may go back to a somewhat older account. Of course, there is nothing especially striking in any of these incidents; but Gawain is the theme of such a multitude of traditions, some of which are certainly Celtic, that we make no improbable supposition in thinking that the tradition is in this case older than the romance.

## CHAPTER XXII.

This chapter appears to contain little else than mere padding. There is the same familiar fighting, there are the usual enchantments by Merlin, the same fiery dragon (pp. 393, 406), but new motives are conspicuously absent. The introduction of the Romans anticipates the more striking account in chap. xxxii., which follows with considerable variation Geoffrey of Monmouth's story of the battles of Arthur with the Romans.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

This chapter contains three leading incidents—the dreams of King Ban and his wife; Merlin's visit to his love; and, lastly, the dream of Julius Caesar, Emperor of Rome, with the adventures of Grisandol.

1. The motive of the first set of dreams is familiar enough to warrant us in regarding them as inventions of the redactor.

2. Merlin's visit to his love possesses the mysterious charm that appears everywhere in Celtic legend; and I cannot help believing that this incident is essentially of Celtic origin, though I can find no earlier version than in the *Merlin*.



3. The last incident appears to combine a variety of different elements. In the appearance of Merlin as a savage we have, perhaps, a lingering tradition originally relating to Myrddin the Bard. In the repeated laughs of Merlin we have reproduced in varied form motives appearing in chap. ii. Merlin's laugh when brought before the Emperor of Rome (p. 432)<sup>1</sup> parallels the third laugh of Merlin in the romance of *Arthur and Merlin*; only there it is Vortigern who takes the place of the Emperor, and the setting is different. We may compare, too, the somewhat similar incident in the *Vita Merlini* (ll. 253-294). Merlin is taken and bound. Suddenly he laughs as the queen passes through the hall, and the king picks a leaf out of her hair; but the bard refuses to tell why he has laughed unless he is set at liberty. Rodarchus orders it to be done. Then Merlin explains that the king is more faithful to the queen than she to him.<sup>2</sup>

One motive of the incident of the twelve disguised chamberlains appears in a modified form in the *Roman des Sept Sages*, but the hint was probably borrowed from the *Merlin*.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to find Merlin giving a new account of his birth to the Emperor. His mother lost her way in the forest of "Brochelard," and a savage man came to her. She bore a child, who was baptized (p. 428).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Uhland's ballad on *Merlin der Wilde*, in which a king's daughter is the guilty one, instead of the queen.

<sup>3</sup> M. Gaston Paris (*Roman des Sept Sages de Rome*, Introd. pp. xxxvii, xxxviii.) remarks on this incident—"Quant au dénouement de ce long drame à tiroirs, le traducteur a cru le rendre plus intéressant et plus moral en ajoutant à la faute de l'impératrice envers son beau-fils un autre crime, son adultère habituel avec un *ribaud* habillé en femme. Le fonds de cette addition malencontreuse n'est pas d'ailleurs de son invention: il la prise dans le roman de *Merlin*, en l'adouciissant toutefois un peu; car ce n'est pas un seul *ribaud* que Merlin sait découvrir parmi les femmes de l'épouse de Jules-César, ce sont les douze chambrrières de l'impératrice qui sont des hommes travestis." M. Paris adds in a footnote—"Voyez sur ce récit et les rapprochements auxquels il prête les articles de MM. Liebrecht et Benfey, *Orient und Occident*, t. i. p. 341, etc. Cette histoire a passé, sous forme de nouvelle, dans le recueil de Nicolas de Troyes, le *Grand Parangon des nouvelles nouvelles*, où elle est la cxxiv<sup>e</sup> du second volume, le seul conservé. Mabilley ne la pas admise dans le choix qu'il a publié dans la Bibliothèque elzévirienne (1869); mais

## CHAPTER XXIV.

All the incidents of this chapter appear to be invented; but the names recur elsewhere than in the *Merlin*.

## CHAPTER XXV.

1. The central incident of this chapter is the marriage of Arthur with Gonnore. There is little to add to what has been already remarked. The original hint is, of course, taken from Geoffrey of Monmouth (ix. 9). In Geoffrey's account Arthur marries Guanhamara after he has subdued the Saxons, and he is not crowned till after all his conquests that occur before the war with the Romans.

2. As an instance of the habit of the romancers to make a motive go as far as possible, we may note that in the tournament at Toraise, after Arthur's marriage, Gawain lays about him with a spar of oak, and stops only when Merlin tells him he has done enough (p. 461). In the tournament at Logres, Gawain repeats the same performance with an apple-tree club (p. 493).<sup>1</sup>

3. The story of the false Gonnore is in its details the invention of the romancer, but some of the material is doubtless not due to him. We find that the trouble which

il l'avait imprimée dans une première publication, parue à Bruxelles et Paris in 1862; elle y porte le n° lxii.: c'est un extrait textuel du roman." Cf. also P. Paris, *Romans de la Table Ronde*, ii. 44; Dunlop's *Hist. of Fiction* (1888), i. 459-461; Meyer, *Indogermanische Mythen*, i. 153, 154. A. Vesselovsky has attempted to show that "the whole legend of Merlin is based upon the apocryphal history of Solomon"<sup>a</sup> and Martolf, but the case cannot be said to be made out, although there are undoubted parallels at more than one point.

<sup>a</sup> See Dunlop's *Hist. of Fiction* (1888), i. p. 457.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. P. Paris, *Romans*, ii. 256. Cf. also the story of Eldol, Geoffrey's *Hist.* vi. 16, and *Havelok*, ll. 1968, 1969—

"Havelok grop þe dore-tre,  
And [at] a dint he slow hem þre."

the false Gonnore made for the Queen is related in *Lancelot*,<sup>1</sup> where is recounted the banishment of Gonnore<sup>2</sup> and the story of Bertelak. The putting of Britain under an interdict, as well as the malady of the false Gonnore, is touched upon (iv. 191). How old the story is, may not be easy to determine, but it seems to be in its essentials older than the *Book of Arthur*.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

In this chapter there appears to be very little but invention. But at the very beginning (pp. 470, 471) is the banishment of Bertelak, just referred to; and on p. 484 is the admirable portrait of Dagenet the Fool (pp. 483, 484), who seems to be an old type. One may easily suspect that the romancer was drawing this character from life.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

1. The references at the beginning of this chapter to the Holy Grail may be left for explanation to those who have traced the origin of that legend.

2. The leading theme of the chapter is the mission of King Loth and his four sons to the rebel kings.<sup>3</sup> In Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 337 the account runs parallel with our version as far as p. 509, l. 7. After that point the French version that is followed by the English translator seems to be almost entirely independent of the version in MS. 337. We may suppose that the later redactor drew freely upon his imagination for details, though he possibly had an older account to

<sup>1</sup> For convenient reference see the Analysis by P. Paris, *Romans de la Table Ronde*, iv. p. 97 *sqq.* and pp. 148–175.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* iv. p. 147.

<sup>3</sup> We may note that in our version the message of Loth to King Clarion is delivered through Mynoras. This feature does not appear in some of the French MSS. Cf. P. Paris, *Romans*, ii. 275.

guide him in the general course of the story. To follow out the details is quite beyond my purpose.

3. In the references to Pelles and his son (p. 520 *sqq.*) we are again taken into the Grail cycle.<sup>1</sup>

4. For an account of Morgain the reader is referred to chap. xix.

## CHAPTERS XXVIII, XXIX.

1. These chapters are filled almost entirely with invented details, playing upon material much older than our romance. Gawain—the Walgan of Geoffrey of Monmouth—here assumes especial prominence, and this he keeps till the close of the romance.

2. The mysterious rubbish uttered by Merlin to Blase (p. 563) affords a not too distant parallel to Merlin's prophecies in Geoffrey's *Historia*, book vii.; while the ideal which Merlin sets up for the knight who is to achieve a great work—that he be chaste and the best knight in the world—is the leading motive of the *Quest of the Holy Grail*.

3. The account of Elizer, son of King Pelles of Lytenoys, and “nevewe to the kynge pellenor and to the kynge Alain” (p. 583), takes us again into the Grail cycle.<sup>2</sup>

## CHAPTER XXX.

The adventure of Ban and Bors at the castle of Agravadain (again taken up in chap. xxxiii. pp. 671–675), while hardly fit for a drawing-room story, is certainly related in most decorous style. The exact source is doubtful, though in the mediation of Merlin, in the use of enchantment, and in the innocence of the maiden, there is at least a reminder of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Rhys, *Studies in the Arthurian Legend*, chap. xii.; Nutt, *Studies on the Legend of the Holy Grail*, Index, i.; P. Paris, *Romans*, iii. 295, 296.

<sup>2</sup> On the confusion of the genealogies see P. Paris, *Romans*, ii. 278.

the amour of Uter with Ygerne. In certain slight particulars there is a parallel to this incident in the *Chevalier au Lyon* of Chrestien de Troyes. Very possibly the incident in the *Book of Arthur* is borrowed from the *Lancelot*, for we read (p. 610, l. 24) that the "maiden hadde conceyved a sone, of whom launcelot after hadde grete ioye and honour for the bounte and Chiualrie that was in him." We may note, too, that in the *Book of Agravain*, towards the end of the *Lancelot*, we have a somewhat similar incident, though with widely different details. Lancelot is overcome by a philtre, and passes the night with Helene, daughter of King Pelles, supposing her to be the queen Guenever. The old Brisane, governess of the princess, is the go-between, and the child afterwards born is Galahad.<sup>1</sup>

#### CHAPTER XXXI.

Nothing in this chapter calls for especial attention, except the story of King Rion, which has been already discussed (chap. xiv.). Merlin's various disguises really introduce no new motive, though the account of Merlin as a harper (p. 615) is one of the most beautiful bits of description in the entire romance (cf. p. 294).

#### CHAPTER XXXII.

1. On the vision of Flualis, P. Paris remarks<sup>2</sup> that it contains nothing Welsh or Breton. The "arrangers" found the story, he thinks, in some special *lai*, and united it as well as they could with the main recital. There is no evidence

<sup>1</sup> Cf. also Rhys, *Studies in the Arthurian Legend*, p. 146; Malory, xi. 2; and P. Paris, *Romans de la Table Ronde*, v. 309, 324, 325. Cf. an article on the Scottish romance of Roswall and Lillian in *Engl. Studien*, xvii. p. 352, where a somewhat similar story is told as a South Slavonic legend.

<sup>2</sup> *Romans*, ii. 329.

that the story was treated in a *lai*, though there can be no question that the vision is not the invention of the romancer.

2. Merlin's visit to Nimiane is another touch of the Celtic legend, which we find reappearing every now and then throughout the romance. What Merlin teaches Nimiane may be compared with what he teaches Morgain le Fee.

3. The interesting story of the maiden and the dwarf is not improbably older than the time of the composition of the *Book of Arthur*, but I cannot point out the original source.

4. The general course of the war with the Romans is evidently suggested by Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia* (ix. 15 to x. 13), though there are differences enough. It is not certain, however, that the redactor went directly to the Latin. Wace's *Brut* (l. 10,999) adds to Geoffrey's account the fact that, after the Emperor's letter is read, Arthur protects the messengers from the rage of the Britons. The same incident recurs in the English version (p. 640). On the other hand, the speeches by Hoel and Augusel, though reproduced by Wace, are here omitted, while Cador's is given.

5. Arthur's dream may be compared with that recounted by Geoffrey (x. 2).

6. The fight with the Giant of Mount St. Michel is much the same in Geoffrey (x. 3) and in the romance (pp. 645-649). Bedver accompanies Arthur in each case. The maiden is in each version the niece of Hoel. The romancer, then, borrowed the story more or less directly from Geoffrey, but Geoffrey is hardly to be regarded as the original inventor. Paulin Paris suggests<sup>1</sup> that the exact designation of the locality would seem to make credible a Breton origin for the legend; but that, on the other hand, the outlines of the story are in some respects similar to those of the legend of Cacus,<sup>2</sup> who was killed by Hercules—

<sup>1</sup> *Romans*, ii. 350, 351.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Virgil, *Aeneid*, viii. 194-275; Ovid, *Fasti*, B. i.

- (1) Cacus and the giant (in Geoffrey) both come from Spain.
- (2) The flames that Cacus breathes correspond to the fires on the mountain.
- (3) The bellowing of cattle shows where Cacus is; the cries of the nurse discover the giant.
- (4) Both live at the top of a mountain.
- (5) Both are blinded by a stroke of their enemy.

Not impossibly the somewhat forced resemblances just noted indicate a closer relationship of the two legends than appears to me probable. M. Paris also calls attention to M. Breal's study of the mythological origin of Cacus, and the possibility that an analogous tradition could have penetrated into several stories. The Celts, like the Etruscans, could have their giant, the scourge of the country, from which a hero would deliver them.<sup>1</sup>

7. In Geoffrey's *Historia* (x. 11) and in the romance, Walgan (Gawain) performs prodigies of valour, and at last kills the Emperor Lucius (*Merlin*, p. 663). Arthur sends the Emperor's body to Rome, with the taunt that such was the tribute that the Britons paid.<sup>2</sup>

### CHAPTER XXXIII.

This final chapter contains a variety of incidents drawn from various sources.

1. The first incident is the very singular fight which King Arthur has with the great cat of the "Lac de Losane." Mr. Phillimore has suggested to me a possible Celtic source, but I must leave the investigation in that field to him and other Celtic specialists.

Through the courtesy of M. Paul Meyer, Director of the École des Chartes in Paris, my attention was directed to a

<sup>1</sup> Cf. also Rhys, *Studies in the Arthurian Legend*, p. 340.

<sup>2</sup> Geoffrey, *Hist.* x. 13; *Merlin*, p. 664.

short paper on this incident by Prof. F. Novati, of Milan, who very kindly sent me a copy.<sup>1</sup> The following is a translation:—

“In the *Merlin* we are told how King Arthur, after having conquered the Romans, instead of pushing on as far as Rome and renewing the glory of Berlinus and Brennus, followed the counsel of the prophet, and turned his attention towards freeing Gaul from a monster which spread terror in all the country about Lake Losanne.<sup>2</sup> This monster, this demon, was in fact nothing more than a simple cat, but the battle which the King sustained against him turned out to be more difficult and fierce than the battle with the giant ravisher of the niece of Hoel, Count of Brittany.<sup>3</sup>

“The battle of Arthur against the cat is described not only in the prose *Merlin*, but also in other texts. Thus, as G. Paris<sup>4</sup> has lately shown, it is referred to in a fragment of a German poem of the twelfth century, evidently drawn from a French source, which the editor has called *Manuel und Amande*,<sup>5</sup> from the name of the chief characters. The poet, after eulogizing warmly and in detail the valour of Arthur, apparently goes on to narrate his death, and tells us how the occasion of it had been a monster, which was a fish and at the same time had the form of a cat.<sup>6</sup> I say *apparently*, because the poem is quite obscure, and some verses are lacking.

“This same legend of the death of the valiant British sovereign in consequence of a struggle with a fish-cat (*gatto-pesce*) is

<sup>1</sup> Originally printed in the Proceedings of the Reale Accademia dei Lincei (Estratto dal vol. iv. 1<sup>o</sup> sem., serie 4<sup>a</sup>, Rendiconti-Seduta del 20 maggio, 1888).

<sup>2</sup> P. Paris, *Les Romans de la Table Ronde*, ii. p. 358 sqq.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 362.

<sup>4</sup> *Les rom. en vers de la T. R.*, Paris, 1887, pp. 219, 220.

<sup>5</sup> Osw. Zingerle, *Manuel und Amande, Bruchstücke eines Artusromans*, in *Zeitsch. für deutsch. Alth.*, N.F., xiv. p. 304, v. 151 sqq.

<sup>6</sup> “Daz sie iz fvr war wizen,  
Ein visch wurde vf gerizzen,  
Daz der kunic sere engalt,  
Als ein katze gestalt.”—v. 155 sqq.



mentioned secondly by a Norman poet, who, however, animated by strong sympathy for England, is indignant at the story, and repudiates it as a fable invented by the French to throw ridicule on the beloved hero of Britain. The verses of André de Coutances have likewise been referred to by Paris, but they are worthy of being quoted entire—

‘ Il ont dit que riens n’a valu,  
Et donc à Arlet n’a chalu  
Que boté fu par Capalu  
Li reis Artu en la palu ;  
  
Et que le chat l’ocist de guerre,  
Puis passa outre en Engleterre,  
E ne fu pas lenz de conquerre,  
Ainz porta corone en la terre,  
  
E fu sire de la contrée.  
Où ont itel fable trovée ?  
Mençonge est, Dex le sot, provée  
Onc greignor ne fu encontrée.’<sup>1</sup>

“Paris seems inclined to believe that Capalu is the name of the portentous cat. If such be the case, he concludes, we have here the monster of the same name which appears in the *Bataille Loquifer*, and which has precisely the head of a cat, the feet of a dragon, the body of a horse, and the tail of a lion.<sup>2</sup>

“This identification of the cat of Losanne with Capalu, or Chapalu, which, however, Paris does not insist on strongly, raises in my opinion difficulties which are, or which seem to me to be, insurmountable. I believe, indeed, that André de Coutances, in the verses which I have quoted, alludes not

<sup>1</sup> A. Jubinal, *Nouv. Rec. de Contes, Dits, Fabliaux, etc.*, t. ii. pp. 2, 3. *Le Romans des Franceis* is the name of this little poem, composed about the beginning of the thirteenth century.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Hist. Littér. de la Fr.* t. xxii. p. 537; Nyrop-Gorra, *St. dell’ Ep. Frane.* p. 143.

to one but to two stories, which if they were not invented by the French, as he seems to believe, were transformed and altered by them so as to ridicule the inhabitants of England by abasing Arthur. We have to do, then, with two adventures of Arthur, entirely independent of each other; with two battles undertaken against two different monsters, battles which had, however, the same disastrous results for the sovereign of Britain, since in the struggle with Chapalu he was worsted and was drowned in a marsh, and in that with the cat he lost his life. And that this is really the state of affairs, will become evident when we come to verify the difference between *Chapalu* and the cat of Losanne.

“If, as Paris saw clearly, the former is to be identified with the Chapalu of the *Bataille Loquifer*, it belongs to the category of fantastic monsters which result from the gathering together of members taken from various animals—to the family, that is, at the head of which is the chimaera. But the Cat of Losanne is something quite different. It is neither more nor less than a cat, but a cat which has attained dimensions far beyond those of ordinary cats, and is endowed with an extraordinary strength and a frightful ferocity. But how and why? We find this how and why described in the most satisfactory manner in a passage of Tristan de Nanteuil, in which the poet is pleased to explain to his hearers the superhuman strength which his hero possessed, and that not less wondrous strength with which the hind was endowed that had nourished him with her milk—

‘Nourris furent d’un lait qui fut de tel maistrie,  
D’une seraine fut, sy com l’istiore crie.  
Il est de tel vertu et de tel seignorie  
Que se beste en a beu elle devient fournye,  
Si grande et si puissant, nel tenés [à folye],  
Que nul ne dure à lui, tant ait chevalerie.

Artus le nous aprouve, qui taut ot baronnye,  
 Car au temps qu'i regna, pour voir le vous affie,  
 Se combata au chat qu'alecta en sa vie  
 Du let d'une seraine qui en mer fut peschie;  
 Mès le chat devint tel, ne vous mentiray mye,  
 Que nuls homs ne duroit en la soye partie  
 Qu'i ne meist affin, à duel et à hachie.  
 Artus le conquesta par sa bachelerie,  
 Mais ains l'acheta cher, sy con l'istoire crye.'<sup>1</sup>

"This passage from *Tristan de Nanteuil* is, then, of great interest for the solution of our little problem. It enables us, in fact, to dispel every doubt concerning the nature of the animal under whose claws perished the most valiant of kings, if we believe the legend preserved by the author of *Manuel und Amande*<sup>2</sup> and indignantly repudiated by André de Coutances. The multi-form *Chapalu* of the *Bataille Loquifer* has no connection with this monstrous cat, which a fisherman has thoughtlessly nourished with the milk of a siren. In the second place the author of *Tristan* calls our attention to the fact that the primitive legend of Arthur and the Cat is quite different from that narrated in the *Merlin*, where the appearance of the demon cat is a visitation of the wrath of God, who wishes to punish a fisherman who had failed to

<sup>1</sup> P. Meyer, *Notice sur le roman de Tristan de Nanteuil* in *Jahrb. für Rom. und Engl. Liter.* ix. p. 11; and *cf.* p. 8, where the poet narrates at length how a siren suckled Tristan at sea, who on account of this nourishment became great as *un cheval de Chartage*. The idea of making Tristan and the hind drink the milk of the siren must have been suggested to the author by reading a romance of the Arthurian cycle, in which it was told that Arthur had come to blows with the cat, but had been able to conquer him. From this source he must also have drawn what he narrates of the first bloody deeds perpetrated by the hind on the fisherman who had received Tristan and on his family. The diabolical cat does the same thing in the *Merlin*. (P. Paris, *op. cit.* p. 360.)

<sup>2</sup> The ambiguous words of the German poet, who does not know whether the cat is a true cat or a fish resembling a cat, induce us to believe that in his source the event was narrated obscurely or too concisely.

fulfil his vow—a sufficiently heavy penalty for a rather light offence!<sup>1</sup>

“That a British or French fisherman should find a siren in his nets will not surprise anyone who remembers how the classic temptresses of Ulysses had preserved their habit of alluring seamen, even in the Middle Ages. Gervase of Tilbury declares that they often appeared in the British Sea.<sup>2</sup> But neither Gervase nor other writers consulted by me say that the milk of the sirens had such prodigious virtue as is attributed to them in the story of the cat and of the hind who nursed Tristan. Perhaps others better versed than I in Bestiaries will succeed in finding some reference to the subject.”

2. If we pass over the continuation of the stories of Agravadain and Flualis, we come to the wonderfully poetic legend of the magic imprisonment of Merlin.<sup>3</sup> The groundwork of this legend is probably Celtic, though we cannot

<sup>1</sup> “How the idea arose of making Losanne and the Mountain of the Lake the hiding-place of the cat, is unknown to me.”—F. NOVATI.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. F. Liebrecht, *Des Gervas. von Tilbury Otia Imperialia*, p. 31.

<sup>3</sup> For a discussion of Malory's version see Sommer's *Studies on the Sources of the Morte Darthur*, iii. 127, 128.

As pointed out in the discussion of Malory's *Morte Darthur* (p. lxx., ante), the version there given differs from ours. The heading of book iv. chap. 1 reads—“How merlyn was affotted & dooted on one of the ladyes of the lake / and how he was shyte in a rocke vnder a stone and there deyed capitulo primo.” Malory calls her “Nyneue.”

In the romance of *Ysaie le Triste* the fairies “announced that they frequently resorted to the bush which confined the magician Merlin, with whom they had lately enjoyed a full conversation on the merits of different knights, and other important affairs of chivalry.”—Dunlop, *Hist. of Fiction* (1888), i. pp. 213, 214.

“We are told in the romance of Lancelot du Lac, that Merlin was confined by his mistress in the forest of Darnant, ‘qui marchoit a la mer de Cornouailles et a la mer de Sorelloys.’”—*Ibid.* i. p. 239.

In the *Ancient Scottish Prophecies* we learn that—

“Meruelous Merling is wasted away  
With a wicked woman, woe might shee be;  
For shee hath closed him in a Craige on Cornwel cost.”

First printed 1503. Reprinted for Ballantyne Club, 1833, and by F. Michel, *Vita Merlini* (p. 80), 1837.

point definitely to an actual Celtic source. We find in a late Triad<sup>1</sup> a story of Merlin entering into the Glass House in Bardsey with his nine bards, bearing with them the thirteen treasures of Britain, and never being heard of afterwards.<sup>2</sup> We may compare, too, the passages in Plutarch (quoted in Rhys's *Studies*, p. 368): "Moreover, there is there [around Britain], they said, an island in which Chronus is imprisoned with Briareus, keeping guard over him as he sleeps; for, as they put it, sleep is the bond forged for Chronus." Nimiane's persistent teasing finds its parallel in the story of Samson and Delilah, but we can easily make too much of such resemblances.<sup>3</sup>

3. The remainder of the chapter doubtless rests in part upon older recitals; but in its present form the conclusion is the work of the redactors. As already noted, the conclusion of the romance is differently given in Bib. Nat. MS. fr. 98 (which appends the Prophecies), and in the printed edition of 1498. The material of the romance was very flexible in the hands of the remodellers. Very probably they would have been more puzzled than we to give an account of their sources. No doubt the conclusion was modified by the *Lancelot*, which is frequently placed in the manuscripts directly after the *Merlin*.

<sup>1</sup> See p. c., *ante*.

<sup>2</sup> Rhys, *Studies*, p. 354.

<sup>3</sup> Brunetto Latino, in his *Li Livres dou Trésor* (pub. by Chabaille, Paris, 1862), mentions prophecies of Merlin, and he evidently knew Geoffrey of Monmouth. Aristotle, he says, was betrayed by woman's wiles, like Merlin. Quoted in *Jahrbücher für Philologie und Paedagogik*, vol. xcii. pp. 283 and 290.

## X.

THE LITERARY VALUE OF THE *MERLIN*.

WE have seen that the English *Merlin* is nothing but a close and almost servile translation of the French *Merlin ordinaire*. Consequently, the only thing for which the unknown maker of the English version can be held responsible is the quality of his translation. The real criticism of the *Merlin* as a work of literary art must be directed to the French original.

Our investigation of the manuscripts and of the sources has shown that the French *Merlin* is made up of a variety of originally unrelated parts, of very unequal merit. To estimate the *Merlin* accurately, we should, therefore, have to disentangle out of the congeries of romances the several elements, and look at them separately. If we deal with the completed romance, we simply have to consider the work as it left the hands of the compilers and arrangers. The defects lie on the surface. The romance is a model of nearly all the faults of construction so lavishly exhibited in most of the mediaeval prose romances. According to nineteenth-century notions, the story is intolerably long and prolix. We are treated to far too many incidents of the same sort. We yawn in the midst of the confused and painfully circumstantial battles, as we learn for the hundredth time that Arthur, or Gawain, or Loth, slit some one to the teeth, and are credibly assured that there were shouts "and stour and ffuH grete crakke, and noyse ther was of brekyng of speres, and stif strokes of swerdes vpon helmes." Of course, elements much the same almost necessarily entered into all descriptions of mediaeval battles, but that is scarcely an excuse for spreading the account over scores of pages. In the *Merlin* as we now have it, perspective and proportion

are entirely disregarded. The story is not an organic whole, in which a germinal motive is developed with logical sequence, and made to control the action of the collective mass: it is rather a loose and inartistic combination of fragments essentially unrelated. Many of the episodes might be dropped altogether, without causing the slightest break in the narrative. Some of these episodes, we must admit, are in themselves interesting, but they stand in no organic relation to the romance as a whole. In other words, there is little or no plot in our sense of that term. The *Merlin* proper—which occupies the first seventh of the romance—is, indeed, simple and reasonably definite in its aim. The beginning is dramatic and impressive, and the conclusion has a poetic beauty felt by every reader. We lose sight of Merlin before the coronation of Arthur; but we may suppose—if we assume the prose *Perceval* to be based on the work of Robert de Borron—that the author imagined he had given sufficient prominence to Merlin by introducing him again in the *Perceval* immediately after the coronation. What Robert had further to tell he narrated in the modest limits which he assigned to the *Perceval*, the original continuation of the versified romance of *Merlin*. When, however, the original continuation was discarded by the later prose romancers, loose rein was given to invention and unintelligent combination.

The framework borrowed from Geoffrey of Monmouth was itself loose enough to admit of any amount of insertion and omission. Naturally enough, we are puzzled to decide who is really the hero of the last six hundred pages. Merlin is plainly the centre of interest in the first hundred pages; but after that point we lose sight of Merlin altogether, except at comparatively rare intervals. He is the *deus ex machina* who descends to extricate some one whom the romancer would not willingly let die, but he is by no means the character to whom our attention is steadily directed. Our interest is

demanded for Arthur and his friends, for Gawain and his circle, for King Loth and his sons, and numerous other characters.

No principle of subordination or of proportion of parts appears to have guided the romancers. The story runs on according to its own sweet will, or, rather, according to the sweet will of the various literary blunderers who put their hands to the work. As far as we can see, it might run on for ever by the easy process of multiplying the battles and borrowing incidents wherever found unclaimed. There are, of course, passages of rare beauty from the mysterious legend of Merlin, which in a certain nameless charm are scarcely surpassed in the whole range of mediaeval romance. But these are buried under a mass of rubbish as formless and unattractive as rubbish can well be, even in a mediaeval romance. We need not, however, imagine that the romancers were seriously distressed at the thought that their additions to the story might be incongruous. The artistic sense in most of the mediaeval story-tellers was sadly awry. They seem to have regarded it as a literary crime to leave the most trivial detail to the imagination of the reader. We may admit freely the beauty of all the passages that anyone wishes to select, but we shall have to confess that we at last weary a little of the endless and desultory babbling of a story-teller, who, to borrow Trollope's phrase, writes because he has to tell a story rather than because he has a story to tell. The materials of the *Merlin* might have been wrought into a tragedy of wonderful power and beauty; but the lack of artistic grouping allows the fragments to sweep along confusedly, like blocks of drift-ice in a river. All are moving in one general direction, but they are not bound together by any laws of connection.

An almost necessary consequence of this looseness of plot is the abruptness of transition. The favourite formula is—



"But now resteth to speke of hem at this time and telleth of King Arthur," or Gonnore, or Gawain, or anyone else that the whim of the romancer suggests. Paulin Paris commended this feature as indicating progress in the art of narration, but I question whether most readers will share his pleasure.

It follows from what has been urged, that we must lay aside all hope of discovering in the *Merlin* any underlying moral purpose. The story is not made to prove any doctrine of religion, or morals, or politics. All of the characters are assumed to be good Catholics, unless they are specifically mentioned as heathen or Saracens. Their morals are tolerably decent, according to the standards of the time; and occasionally we even get an incidental bit of moral suggestion. But the fact which most strikes a careful reader is, that the character of Merlin has not altogether improved in the slipshod process of development followed in the romance. The dignity of the boy-prophet, as he summons the trembling counsellors and expounds easily what had baffled the clerks, compels a certain sort of admiration. Even when he participates in the plot which results in the birth of Arthur, we look upon him as a grave and judicious adviser. But after the coronation of Arthur, though Merlin still plays the rôle of sage and prophet, and figures in more than one scene full of a strange beauty, we cannot but feel that he is too often degraded to the level of the mountebank and the juggler.

As we read the romance we cannot but be impressed with the fact that most of the characters are unskilfully drawn. The old romancers seem to have been able to imagine but one trait of character at a time, and they display a signal inability to follow out a complicated analysis. The natural result is a remarkable similarity and conventionality in the figures that crowd the page. Instead of delineating the characters by a combination of fine touches, the romancers lay on the colours in broad lines, with little or no attempt at artistic

discrimination. The characters are not developed as in Shakspeare's plays and in the best modern novels, but are presented about as complete at the beginning of the romance as at the end. Some characters almost appear to have been invented for the express purpose of giving sufficient exercise in the use of the superlative.

That this method of treatment is painfully superficial and external, needs no proof; but it is the method of the *Merlin*. It is, indeed, a striking fact that, although the romance contains much that is mysterious, it contains little that is really profound. The story is a singular mixture of the plain and simple and of the dark and mysterious. The knights and ladies discuss little except love and chivalry and war, and the passing questions of the day. They seem to have troubled themselves scarcely at all with such great problems of life as meet us in the novels of George Eliot, and there is little reason why they should. Theirs was an age of faith, and they did not have to grope in darkness and doubt. Their passions were the simple elementary passions of love, hate, jealousy. Their virtues were the simple virtues of bravery, sincerity, courtesy, generosity. We are almost led to think, therefore, because we are told so much about these men and women, and their characters are apparently so transparent, that we know them; but we never succeed in lifting the veil that hides their inner lives. We catch glimpses now and then of a background of mystery in the strange life of Merlin—most of all when we see the magic spell stealing upon him as gently as music breathes across a bank of violets—but even then we are not allowed to gaze into the depths of the great magician's heart; and we close the book with the feeling that between us and the men and women of the romance is a great gulf fixed, which we must cross before we can know them as they are.

We have sufficiently dealt with the more serious faults in the *Merlin*. We may now bestow a word upon the literary

style of the romancers who pieced together the story. Here, too, their work is faulty enough. They have not yet learned how to write a neat and well-balanced prose. Their sentences lack unity; their pronouns have a bewildering vagueness of reference; their paragraphs lack movement and artistic balance. The connection is of the loosest sort, and is helped out by an excessive use of the conjunction *and*. Yet the style at times has a grace and harmony, as well as an air of distinction, not unworthy of the aristocratic circle for which the romance was intended. Even the amorous adventures are related in a tone of high breeding that relieves the artistic conscience, if not the moral sense. Some of the descriptions are charmingly poetic, and are ablaze with light and colour. There is, indeed, a touch of conventionality in many of the descriptions of natural scenery, but even here the mediaeval *naïveté* lends a freshness and beauty that are always engaging. Vivacity is secured by frequent dialogue. Then, too, the air of verisimilitude is almost perfect. Detail is heaped upon detail, until the realistic effect is irresistible. We may feel that the art is defective, but we must admit that art itself cannot make the narrative seem more real.

We may find still other excuses for the *Merlin*. We have been testing the romance by the literary standards of the nineteenth century. If, however, we judge it by the literary standards of seven centuries ago, we ought perhaps to soften our criticism of more than one passage that now seems insufferably tedious. In those days of few books most readers were doubtless glad to have the story drawn out as far as possible. Even the accounts of the battles, which no one now reads except the editor, the printer, and the proof-reader, may have been among the most valued portions of the work. We may thus develop a spirit of charitable judgment otherwise quite beyond us. And yet, in our most charitable moments we may hesitate to believe that the *Merlin* was accepted as

a finished specimen of literary art even in the Middle Ages : an age that possessed the work of Chrestien de Troyes and Walter Map was not so devoid of literary sense as to be unaware of the more glaring defects of such a composite romance as the *Merlin*.

Considered as a picture of chivalry the *Merlin* has for us a permanent value. It gives us more than one vivid glimpse of the every-day life of the period to which it belongs. The deeds of Arthur and his knights are transferred to the time of chivalry, and illuminated with all the light and colour of that picturesque age. If we count this of small importance, we can take some satisfaction that in the *Merlin* we have a book of the deepest interest to the Europe of six or seven centuries ago, and that as we read we can imagine more clearly the ideals of an age profoundly important in the development of our modern civilization.

As regards the work of the English translator, we have, perhaps, sufficiently touched upon that in our study of the manuscripts. Most of his translation is a mechanical jog-trot that follows every turn of the original. He freely uses French terms, and transfers French constructions, and even entire French sentences, to the English page. His sentences are in the main the sentences of the original, with all their faults of confusion and overcrowding. Yet the style has numerous distinct excellences. The diction is often direct and vigorous, and invariably escapes the turgid inflation so characteristic of English prose a little more than a century later. The period to which the translation belongs was singularly barren in works of creative imagination, and could not very consistently have made unfavourable reflections upon the unknown scholar who toiled through the heavy task. His achievement is hardly worthy to be placed beside the masterpiece of Malory ; but it has an interest all its own, and it may well be valued as a not insignificant monument of old English prose.

## XI.

The English manuscript from which the prose romance is printed, is described in the "Advertisement" to Part i. of the *Merlin* (E.E.T.S.Lond. 1865). A fragment of another version is contained in a single folio leaf of a fifteenth-century paper manuscript in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. The passage corresponds to p. 315, l. 15 to p. 317, l. 24. Kölbing gives the variants, and decides that the Oxford fragment cannot be a copy of the Cambridge MS.<sup>1</sup>

I find also in the Catalogue of the Ashmolean MSS. (802: 4), Oxford, the following notice of a manuscript of *Merlin* contained "In a collection of Apocryphal tracts, genealogical and heraldic collections, astrological observations, and miscellaneous; by Simon Forman, M.D.":—"The first 32 chapters of a Romance of the life of Merlin, beginning thus: 'The Parliament and consultation of the Devils, and their decree about the begetting of Merlin, about the year of Christ 445.'" (Fo. 66-82.) The last is thus entitled: "Cap. 32. How Merlin told the Hermit who was his father, and entreated him to write this book of his life and others of his works that should follow, and how the Hermit Blase did conjure him by the name of God, being much afearred of him."<sup>2</sup> (Fo. 81 b.) "Forman designed to write Cap. 33, but left this copy unfinished, and seven blank leaves follow." (*Catal.* p. 443).

<sup>1</sup> *Altenglische Bibl.* iv. p. xxi.

<sup>2</sup> I have modernized the spelling, as I suspect that I did not verify my transcript at the time I made it.

## ADDITIONAL NOTES.

It may be proper to observe that pages 1 to CL have been in print since the summer of 1892. Hence the changes that have been made in those pages are only such as could be made without too great a disturbance of the text. In the remainder of the book, notice has been taken of the more important recent literature on the Merlin legend. This appears chiefly in Section VIII.

I take this opportunity to express my renewed thanks to Mr. H. L. D. Ward for his great kindness in going through the proof-sheets and making several valuable suggestions.

p. XIII. 1893. Zimmer, H.—Nennius Vindicatus, Berlin. A masterly work.

p. XIII. 1893. Ward, H. L. D.—Lailoken (or Merlin Silvester), *Romania*, 1893, pp. 504–526.—This article I have been able to use in Section VIII. as it was passing through the press.

p. XIII. 1894. Richter, G.—Beiträge zur Erklärung und Textkritik des mittlenglischen Prosaromans von Merlin, Erste Hälfte. (Diss.) Altenburg, 1894. Reprinted in *Englische Studien*, xx. pp. 347–377.—The author attempts a critical reconstruction of the English text of our romance by the aid of the French version. The work is so carefully done that one can only regret that it rests for the most part upon a late print of the French text (1528), rather than upon the MSS.

p. XIII. 1894. Sommer, H. O.—Le Roman de Merlin. London.—This edition of the French *Roman de Merlin* is a reproduction in ordinary type of the British Museum MS. Add. 10,292. This book was not accessible to me until after my entire discussion was in print and the “revise” had been returned to the printers. The editor describes the MS. fully, gives its history, and prints a table indicating the relation of the Arthurian MSS. in the British Museum to MSS. Add. 10,292–10,294. His discussion of the text is very brief, and touches only the salient points connected with its development. On p. xxvi., note, he calls attention to a MS. of *Merlin* not mentioned in Ward’s *Catalogue of Romances*. This is Add. 32,125 in the British Museum, dating from the beginning of the fourteenth century. It contains the *Saint Graal* (“complete save as to one leaf”) and the *Merlin*. Sommer remarks that this MS. “is as valuable and interesting as No. 747 of the Bibliothèque Nationale, but the latter is better written.”

p. XIII. 1894. Lloyd, J. E.—Myrddin Wylt in *Dict. of Nat. Biog.*, vol. xl. pp. 13, 14.

p. XIII. 1894. Maccallum, M. W.—Tennyson’s Idylls of the King and Arthurian Story from the Sixteenth Century. New York. A popularly-written book touching on several matters relating to the use of the Merlin legend in literature.

p. XIII. 1894. Kingsford, C. L.—Merlin Ambrosius or Myrddin Emrys in *Diet. of Nat. Biog.*, vol. xxxvii. pp. 285–288.—This article mentions a long life of Merlin in Leland's *Commentarii de Scriptoribus*, pp. 42–48, and a paper by M. Darbois de Jubainville on “Merlin est-il un personnage réel?” in the *Revue des questions historiques*, v. 559–568.

p. XIII. 1895. Wechssler, Edward.—Über die verschiedenen Redaktionen des Robert von Borron zugeschriebenen Graal-Lancelot-Cyclus. Halle a S. pp. 64.—This is an important contribution to the study of the relations of the groups of romances to one another, but it comes too late for me to make use of it. The reader should note the favourable review of this paper by Gaston Paris in the *Romania* for July, 1895, pp. 472–475.

p. XLV. note 1. For i. 86 read p. xcvi.

p. XLVII. note 3. For Völmöller read Vollmöller.

p. LI. Lamartine tells a story in his sketch of Jeanne d'Arc (chapter viii.), of her being influenced by a prophecy attributed to Merlin, that the kingdom would be saved by a young, chaste maiden.

p. LI. Paul de Musset, in his life of Alfred de Musset, p. 55, tells us of the interest Alfred took in the Merlin story.

p. LI. On the Provençal fragments, see also Gröber's *Grundriss der rom. Phil.*, Bd. ii. Abth. 2, p. 68, which refers to the *Revue des l. r.*, 22, 105–115; 237–242.

p. LI. For an excellent discussion of the *Conte del Brai*, see Wechssler's paper on the Graal-Lancelot-Cyclus, pp. 37–51.

p. LIII. For the Portuguese *Merlin*, see Gröber's *Grundriss der rom. Phil.*, Bd. ii. Abth. 2, pp. 213, 214.

p. LIII. note 5. For to read zu.

p. LIII. The best account of *Mertijn* is in W. J. A. Jonckbloet's *Geschiedenis der Nederlandsche Letterkunde*, Groningen, 1884, i. pp. 200–229.

p. LIV. In 1892 appeared a novel by Paul Heyse entitled *Merlin*. The story is not a reproduction of the old legend, but is essentially a nineteenth-century novel with here and there a motive, or at least a hint, drawn from the mediaeval romance. Cf. a paper in *The Atlantic Monthly*, March, 1893.

p. LIV. note 3. Goldmark's opera appeared in 1886.

p. LXVIII. l. 9. As an interesting proof of Merlin's fame as a prophet, we may note that Defoe, in his account of the great plague in London in 1665, says that fortune-tellers and prophets greatly flourished at that time, and that they displayed the head of Merlin as a sign.

p. LXXXIII. l. 27. The opinion of Merlin held by the antiquary Leland, who busied himself much with the Arthurian legend, is worth quoting:—“Sunt ibi tamen, si quis penitus inspiciat, talia, qualia magno desiderantur antiquae cognitionis incommodo, & quae à Gulielmo lecta, potius quàm intellecta, nullum prae se tulerunt comòdum. Rursus apponam & aliud eiusdem honorifici scilicet, non modò de historiae interprete, verù etiam de Arturio ipso testimonium. Liqueat à mendacibus esse conficta, quaecunque de Arturio, & Merlino ad pascendum minus prudentium curiositatem homo ille scribendo vulgavit. Vt sexcenties obganniat: fuit quidem Merlinus vir in rerum naturalium cognitione, & praecipuè in Mathesi vel ad miraculum vsque eruditus: quo nomine Principibus eius aetatis meritò gratissimus erat longèq; alius, quàm vt se putaret subjiendum iudicio alicuius cucullati, & desidis monachi. Sed Arturiù, & Merlinum, illum fortiozem, hunc eruditiozem, quàm vt plebis vel dicacitatem, vel importunitatem eurent, omittam. Illud, quod monachus

monacho etiam mortuo inuidet mihi iniquissimum videtur."—*Assertio inclytissimi Arturij*, p. 356. London, 1644.

p. LXXIV. l. 6. See an interesting page or two on Caermarthen in Prothero's *Life and Letters of Dean Stanley*, ii. pp. 351, 352.

p. LXXVI. l. 9. See the remarks on this play by Halliwell-Phillipps in his *Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare*, p. 193.

p. LXXVII. Blackmore's *King Arthur* (1697) is an enlargement, in twelve books, of the *Prince Arthur*.

p. LXXVIII. Bartlett's concordance to Shakespeare notes several references to Merlin.

In the catalogue of a London bookseller (1894) I note the following title : "Merlinus Anglicus Junior, The English Merlin revived, or his prediction upon the affairs of the English Commonwealth. 1644. 4to."

Maccallum, in his *Tennyson's Idylls and Arthurian Story*, pp. 161-165, calls attention to Fielding's *Tragedy of Tragedies, or the Life and Death of Tom Thumb the Great* (1730), a burlesque piece in which Merlin is introduced here and there.

Among other eighteenth-century references to Merlin may be noted that in Warton's poem on the *Grave of King Arthur* (1777).

p. LXXXIII. Bishop Heber made some use of the Merlin legend in his unfinished *Masque of Guendolen*.

Wordsworth refers briefly to Merlin in one of his sonnets and in his *Artegal and Elidure*.

Bulwer introduces Merlin into his heroic poem *King Arthur* (1849), and remarks in the preface: "Merlin . . . is here represented less as the wizard of popular legend, than as the seer gifted with miraculous powers for the service and ultimate victory of Christianity."

Emerson wrote two short poems entitled *Merlin*, but they scarcely do more than suggest the name of the hero.

Professor John Veitch has made use of Merlin in his poems entitled, *Merlin and Other Poems*, 1889. These I have not seen.

p. LXXXV. l. 15. My remarks on Nennius were in print before Zimmer's *Nennius Vindicatus* appeared. His book, it is needless to observe, marks a new epoch in the study of Nennius; but for the purpose of our general discussion, the main point is the one which I have emphasized—the priority by a considerable time of the *Hist. Britonum* of Nennius over the *Hist. Reg. Brit.* of Geoffrey of Monmouth. Zimmer assigns the *Historia Britonum* proper to about the close of the eighth century. See p. 66 *seq.*

p. LXXXV. l. 19. Zimmer remarks, p. 282: "Die sogenannte eigentliche *Historia Brittonum* (7-56) ist als Geschichtsquelle absolut werthlos."

p. LXXXIX. Zimmer's date for Geoffrey's *Hist. Reg. Brit.* is 1132-1135. Cf. *Nennius Vindicatus*, p. 278.

p. xcvi. l. 8. For the Mabinogion, see Rhys's *Studies*, chap. i.

p. cxxv. See F. Lot's *Études sur la Provenance du Cycle Arthuriens* in the *Romania*, 1895-96. M. Lot's articles are directed against Zimmer's theory concerning the origin of the Arthurian romances, and conclude as follows: "Après comme avant les travaux du savant celtiste de Greifswald, il paraît évident que l'influence des Celtes insulaires a été beaucoup plus considérable, et même vraiment prépondérante, dans la transmission des éléments du cycle arthurien."



See, on the other hand, Zimmer's article in *Zeitschrift für franz. Sprache und Lit.*, xiii. 230 *seq.* (Beiträge zur Namenforschung in den altfranz. Arthurepen); Pütz in *Z. f. f. Spr. u. Lit.*, xiv. 161 *seq.* (Zur Gesch. der Entwicklung der Artursage).

p. CLXXXIII. See a paper by Kellner in *Englische Studien*, xx. 1-24, on "Abwechselung und Tautologie," in which he discusses this marked feature of mediaeval prose style.

p. CLXXXVI. note 3. Rhys brings the name Merlin into connection with Moridunum (Caermarthen). He remarks that the form *Merlin* corresponds to the form *Moridūnjos*, i.e. of moridunum or the sea-fort. *Hibbert Lect.*, p. 160.

p. CCVI. l. 1. A poem of 504 lines (Lambeth MS. 853, about 1430 A.D.) is called *pe Develis Parliament*, and describes a scene similar to that in our romance, but with no mention of Merlin.

p. CCVI. l. 12. Leland, in a paper on *Etrusco-Roman Remains*, published in report of Internat. Folk-Lore Congress for 1891, remarks (p. 192) on the widespread recognition of Dusio in Italian country districts.

p. CCVII. l. 2. Skeat has a good note on Antichrist in *Piers Plowman*, vol. iv. sec. 1, p. 442 (E.E.T.S.).

p. CCVII. l. 8. For further references on the intercourse of Devils with women, see the Life of St. Michael in the *Early South Eng. Legendary*, p. 306 (E.E.T.S.), and the *Morte Arthure*, l. 612 (E.E.T.S.). For incubi, see Giraldus Cambrensis, *Itin. Camb.* ch. v.; Cockayne, *Leechdoms*, I. pp. xxxviii.-xli.; *Melusine* (E.E.T.S.), p. 383; Skeat's *Chaucer*, v. 315. For parallels to Merlin's birth, see Nutt's *Problems of Heroic Legend* in report of Internat. Folk-Lore Congress for 1891 (p. 122), and Child's *Ballads* (large ed.), i. 63, note. Cf. also—

"There ys a gyant of gret Renowne,  
He dystrowythe bothe sete and towyn  
And aȝ þat euyr he may;  
And as the boke of Rome dothe teȝ,  
He wase get of the deweȝ of heȝ,  
As hys moder on slepe lay."

*Torrent of Portyngale*, 921-926 (E.E.T.S.).

p. CCVII. l. 12. Parallels to Merlin's precocity are found in the story of Hermes in the Homeric Hymns, and in Child's *Ballads* (large ed.), viii. 479, ix. 226.

p. CCVII. l. 18. I might have pointed out the contradiction in the *Merlin*, p. 16, where the boy saves his mother from being burnt. On this punishment, Child remarks, *Ballads* (large ed.), iii. 113: "The regular penalty for incontinence in an unmarried woman, if we are to trust the authority of romances, is burning." See also vi. 508, where C. gives a variety of references from ballads.

p. CCXIV. On the dragon-banner, see also Zimmer's *Nemius Vindicatus*, p. 286, note, where the Roman banner is commented upon, and the significance of *pen dragon* explained.

In the *Chanson de Roland*, l. 3265, there is a dragon-banner in the army of the pagans who are arrayed against Charlemagne. In the romance of *Octavian*, l. 1695 (South Eng. version), the Saracens have one.

p. CCXXIV. Spenser makes use of the story of the beards, F. Q., Bd. vi. c. 1, st. 14 *seq.*, and applies it to Crudor.

In the Norse *Saga Þiðriks Konungs af Bern*, c. 12, King Samson orders Elsing, Jarl of Bern, to send him, among other things, a dog-collar of gold and a leash made of his own beard.

p. CCXXVII. The game of chess (referred to on p. 362 of the *Merlin*) was a common diversion in the Middle Ages. See Child's *Ballads* (large ed.), viii. 454.

p. CCXXIX. Meyer, in his *Indogermanische Mythen*, i. 153, 154, urges the Oriental origin of the Merlin legend, or, at least, after mentioning the pranks of that lively little demon Ashmedai, and bringing them into relation to the Gandharve legends of Indian mythology, he passes to discuss "die aus Indien stammende alt-französische Merlinsage . . . in welcher der wilde Mann Merlin, der erst ungebärdig Speise und Trank umwirft, dann aber nach reichlichem Genuss von Honig, Milch, Warmbier, und Braten einschläft, vom Seneschal des Kaisers gebunden wird und diesem nun die Untreue seiner Frau offenbart, etc." Comparison should also be made with the similar incident in the story of Lailoken, "Part ii. : King Meldred and Lailoken," published in the *Romania* for 1893, pp. 522-525.

p. CCXXX. Gawain's exploits with the club may be compared with those of Gamelyn with the same weapon. Cf. Skeat's *Chaucer*, iii. 400. See also Scherer's *Gesch. d. deutschen Lit.* p. 183.

p. CCXXXV. In Rhys's Preface to Malory's *Morte Darthur*, pp. xxv., xxviii., xxix., I find the following remarks on a savage cat of Celtic tradition :—"In an obscure 'poem consisting of a dialogue between Arthur and Glewlwyd Gavaelwawr,' occurs at the end of the fragment the following passage, in which Kei is represented as fighting with a great cat :—

Worthy Kei went to Mona  
To destroy lions.  
His shield was small  
Against Palug's Cat.  
When people shall ask  
'Who slew Palug's Cat?'  
Nine score . . . .  
Used to fall for her food.  
Nine score leaders  
Used to . . . .

The manuscript is imperfect, and it breaks off just where one should have heard more about Cath Palug, or 'Palug's Cat,' a monster, said in the Red Book Triads to have been reared by the Sons of Palug, in Anglesey."

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COLLATION OF THE PRINTED *MERLIN* OF THE  
E.E.T.S. WITH THE MS. IN THE UNIVERSITY  
LIBRARY, CAMBRIDGE, BY ALFRED ROGERS.<sup>1</sup>

Page	Line	For	Read	Page	Line	For	Read
1	3	other	others.	5	20	have	haue.
1	3	plesier	plesiére.	5	25	hir	hire.
1	4	feer	feers.	5	25	wise	wyse.
1	4	to-gedir	to-gedire.	5	32	lyvinge	lyvyngé.
1	16	othir	othirs.	5	35	doughter	doughters.
1	17	their [feire <sup>f</sup> ]	their sem- semblant blaunt [and ignore the note].	6	2	maner	manere.
				6	8	labour	laboure.
				6	22	women	wemen.
				6	30	her	here.
1	17	greved	greued.	6	33	othir	other.
2	5	powre	powre.	6	33	your	youre.
2	16	suffer	suffere.	6	36	now	neuer.
2	18	power	powers.	7	1	way	wey
2	19	be-raffte	bereffte.	7	14	yef	yet.
2	21	our power	oure powers.	7	14	hir	hire.
2	22	maner	manere.	7	17	sayde	seyde.
2	27	our	ours.	7	18	your	youre.
2	34	ben	bene.	7	27	manere	manere.
3	1	sithe	suche.	7	27	hire	hire.
3	6	have	haue	7	28	hire	hire.
3	7	power	powers.	7	footnote	is repeated twice	is repeated.
3	10	their	theirs.	8	1	hir	hire.
3	12	enquire	engin.	8	6	have	haue.
3	16	their	theirs.	8	13	oon	oo.
3	20	doughters	doughteres.	8	24	upon	vpon.
3	22	hir	hire.	8	25	which	whiche.
3	25	maner	manere.	8	32	her	here.
3	27	mannes	mannes.	9	4	servyse	seruyse.
3	28	their	theirs.	9	7	hir	hire.
3	29	their	theirs.	9	24	hir	her.
4	1	gretter	gretters.	9	27	clothed	clethed.
4	1	wrother	wrothere.	9	30	hir	hire.
4	18	desier	desiere.	10	4	here	here.
4	20	her	here.	10	8	after	etter.
4	21	her	here.	10	10	maner	manere.
4	24	manere	manere.	10	15	w[orlde]	worlde
4	31	mans werke	maner werkis	10	28	[haue]	haue
5	2	neuer	neuere.	10	33, 34	diffoulde	diffouled.
5	8	The man	That man.	11	3	[this]	this.
5	10	hir fader	hire faders.	11	7	hir	hire.
5	14	her	here.	11	27	Jhesu	Ihesu.
5	18	their	theirs.	11	30	slepyng	slepyng.
5	19	hir	hire.				

<sup>1</sup> Kölbing (*Altenglische Bibl.* iv. pp. xix., xx.) gives a collation of the first chapter of the *Merlin* of the E.E.T.S. with the MS. If he had referred to the edition of 1875 he would have found several of his corrections anticipated.—W.E.M.

Page	Line	For	Read	Page	Line	For	Read
12	15	fiendes, and axeden	fiendes axeden ['and' is crossed out].	17	17	son	sone.
				17	20	neuer	neuere.
				17	23	neuer	neuere.
				17	31	[arm]	pue [and ignore the footnote].
12	27	neuer	neuere.				[ignore the note].
12	27	women	wemen.	18	3	examyned	
12	31	confessour	confessoure.				
12	36	neuer	neuere.	18	18	whom	who.
12	36	after	aftere.	18	28	shall	shalt.
13	3	syker	sykere.	19	10	all	alle.
13	7	feer	feere.	19	15	guylte	gylte.
13	8	for	fore.	19	19	clayned	claymed.
13	13	good	gode.	20	17	layes	layest
13	15	hir	hire.	20	18	Thy[n]ke	thynke.
13	16	hir	hire.	20	24	youre	your.
13	17	after	aftere.	22	15	here	here.
13	18	her	here.	23	2	elayn	Elayn.
13	22	neuer	neuere.	24	14	lyfte hym	lyfte hym in
13	23	woman	Note the MS. has wonan.	24	23	socour	socoure.
				24	23	returned	returned.
13	26	hir	hire.	24	29	barons	barouns.
13	30	hir	hire.	24	29	longer	lenger.
13	30	where	where	25	1	youre	your.
13	31	ouere hir	ouere hire.	25	1	words	wordes.
13	31	hir	hire.	26	18	hym	lym.
13	35	hir	hire.	27	14	straunge	strange.
14	1	goo	geo.	27	19	tour	ture.
14	5	tour	ture.	27	20	maner	manere.
14	13	tour	ture.	28	2	stonde <sup>1</sup> Do me	stonde. it is do me [and ignore the note].
14	17	repentaunce	repentaunce.				
14	17	modir	modire.	28	4	sir	sire.
14	20	ther	there.	28	6	labour	laboure.
14	21	arte	art.	28	16	tour	ture.
14	24	repentaunce	repentaunce.	28	18	labour	laboure.
14	24	moder	modere.	28	24	anothir	anothire.
14	25	her	here.	28	27	mater	matere.
14	28	were	w[er]e.	29	8	tour	ture.
14	30	moder	modere.	29	22	knew	knewe.
14	32	feer	feere.	30	2	to-geder	to-gedere.
15	3	tour	ture.	31	9	tour	ture.
15	4	after	aftere.	31	10	hour	houre.
15	4	fader	fadere.	31	21	manere	manere.
15	6	moder	modere.	31	24	tour	ture.
15	7	othir	othire.	32	11	disease	disese.
15	10	whan	whane.	32	17	whiche	whene.
15	11	lengar	lengare.	32	19	[s]ef	ef
15	17	hir	hire.	32	20	the werke	thi werke
15	18	ther	there.	32	30	Arthur	Arthure.
15	19	her	here.	33	35	the <sup>1</sup>	tho [and ignore the note].
15	20	suffir	suffire.				
15	20	ther	there.	34	31	her	here.
15	25	neuer	neuere.	35	9	sir	sire.
15	27	hir	hire.	36	16	hier	hiere.
15	31	neuer	neuere.				
16	16	oughtnotnot	oughtnot.				
16	23	Merlin	Merlyn.				
17	1	come	comen.				

Page	Line	For	Read	Page	Line	For	Read
36	17	ther <sup>1</sup> the	ther ther the [and ignore the note].	61	8	when	whan
36	28	no do	ne do.	63	13	had	hadde.
37	7	said	seide.	64	20	theyr	theyre.
37	34	vnder	vndere.	64	27	resceve	receyve
38	3	Vortiger	Vortigers.	66	21	traytour	traytoure.
38	3	dragon̄s	dragouns.	66	21	semblaunce	semblaunce.
38	4	other	othere.	67	36	Be-war	Beware.
38	7	other	othere	69	30	barons	barouns.
38	9	dragon̄s	dragouns.	70	20	barons	barouns.
38	16	other	othere.	70	21	barons	barouns.
38	23	demañdest	demaundest.	72	14	nede	mede.
38	31	greter	gretere.	72	26	told	tolde.
38	35	dragon̄s	dragouns.	72	31	este	efte.
39	11	dragon̄s	dragouns.	73	9	lawghinge	lawghynge.
39	36	don	don.	73	13	kyng	kinge.
40	3	dragon̄s	dragouns.	74	5	oo[n]	oo
40	4	reade	reade.	74	21	performe	pe[n]forme.
40	15	their	theire.	76	9	your barons	your barouns
40	32	yeye	yeue.	77	27	couenaunte <sup>2</sup>	comenauntis [and ignore the note].
40	34	dragons	dragouns.	78	8	barons	barouns.
41	3	their	theire.	78	21	seide he	seide that he.
41	10	heir	heire.	78	26	barons	barouns.
42	8	their	theire.	78	29	barons	barouns.
42	9	power	powere.	79	3	barons	barouns.
44	18	say	sey.	80	2	barons	barouns.
45	35	kyuge	kyng.	80	20	heyer.	eyer[corrected from heyer].
46	6	sir	sire.	80	21	hour	houre.
46	34	a-queynted	aqueyntid.	81	21	barons	barouns.
47	21	her	hier.	81	34	their	theire.
48	24	you	yow.	81	35	seide	seiden.
49	19	heir	heire.	82	23	barons	barouns.
50	25	their	theire.	83	8	barons	barouns.
50	34	great	grete.	83	17	come	conne.
50	36	bileve to	bilevein[cor- rected from 'to'].]	83	33	barons	barouns.
52	28	semblaunt	semblaunt.	84	5	somme	somme.
53	8	neke	nekke.	84	12	barons	barouns.
53	26	other	othere.	84	15	barons	barouns.
54	35	be-gynnyng	be-gynnyng	85	20	barons	barouns.
55	20	theire	theire.	86	5	o[on]	o
55	22	theire	theire.	86	14	wher-in	where-in
56	11	felishap	feliship.	87	17	a[nd]	a
57	13	quynsynne	[the M.S. has quynsyme].	88	14	knight	knyght.
58	9	seden	seiden.	88	22	be a thyng	be thyng.
58	14	couenaunt <sup>1</sup>	comenaunt [and ignore the note].	89	7	man̄nes	man̄nes.
58	14	labour	laboure.	90	2	woman	weman.
58	15	ben	ben.	90	footnote	The words 'soones as' are repeated	The words 'soone as' occur after the words 'sone as.'
59	11	demonstraunce	demonstraunce	91	14	man̄nes	man̄nes.
59	34	honour	honoure.	91	35	barons	barouns.
60	3	thinge	thyng.	91	36	barons	barouns.
61	2	they	thei	93	5	oo[n]	oo

Page	Line	For	Read	Page	Line	For	Read
94	12	tresour	tresoure.	137	10	shorte	short.
94	15	advise	advyse	137	11	woued	wued.
94	32	they	thei	138	18	sholder	sholdere.
94	33	rede	yede.	138	11	boteller	bottelere.
95	1	baroñs	barouns.	138	24	deliuer	deliuere.
95	1	heir	heire.	138	26	their	theire.
95	19	baroñs	barouns.	140	8	archebisshop	archebishop.
95	22	baroñs	barouns.	141	11	their	theire.
96	5	gouernoure	gouernoure.	141	18	doughter	doughtere.
96	15	all	alle.	141	19	valour	valoure.
98	32	require	require.	143	6	lenger	lengere.
99	16	honour	honoure.	143	8	that they	that ther.
100	31	their	theire.	143	20	o[on] worde	o worde.
101	2	other	othere.	145	32	his	hys.
101	10	towne	town.	146	10	their	theire.
102	9	engender	engendere.	146	17	through	thourgh.
102	31	vilenis	vileins.	148	12	be-war of the <sup>1</sup>	bewar of them of the [and ignore the note].
102	34	performe	pe[r]forme.				
104	footnote.	Add after the word 'MS.' 'but crossed through.'		149	10	I-comē	I-comen.
106	7	this	the.	149	31	soper	sopere.
106	20	theire	theire.	151	9	baner	banere.
107	1	vestmentis	vestmentz.	153	19	ther	there.
107	13	vestymentis	vestymenz.	154	16	baner	banere.
		riall.	riall.	156	20	cleped the roy	cleped roy
108	14	honoure	honoure.	158	19	vigerously	vigerously.
108	18	perveied	purveied.	160	17	us	vs.
108	19	presentis	presentz.	162	26	kynge	kynge.
109	28	is this that	is that.	165	1	ther was	ther nas.
110	22	tour	tour.	167	11	a[nd]	a
110	26	a-noynted	a-noyntid.	169	32	times	tymes.
111	5	engendered	engendred.	170	27	embraced	embraced.
111	13	in his keynge	in keypnge.	171	4	heyr	heyre.
113	5	their	theire.	174	3	lond	londe.
113	11	their	theire.	174	11	That beste	The beste.
113	18	seriantis	seriantz.	174	15	socour	socoure.
113	23	out	oute.	176	35	socour	socoure.
115	2	fro	fro.	177	17	bachelor	bachelere.
116	36	There	ther.	179	12	a[nd]	a
119	13	astonyd	astonyed.	179	21	myster	mystere.
119	26	commons	comouns.	179	22	and ther the	and the
119	31	discounfite[d]	discounfited.			kynge	kynge.
120	12	Neuertheless	neuertheles.	179	31	wife	wif.
120	29	castelles	castellis.	180	4	barouns	barouns.
122	3	that	thet.	180	17	squyer	squyere.
124	2	a[s]	as.	180	19	covetted	coveited.
124	26	a[t]	at.	181	11	y[e] be	y be.
125	2	both	bothe.	185	8	City	Cite.
126	30	yours	your.	186	3, 4	Emperour	Emperoure.
126	32	imprisonment	inprisonment	187	20	the xj	tho xj
127	1	vylenis	vyleins.	191	13	Gaharet	Gaheret.
127	6	Sir	Sire.	193	13	soone as that	soone at that.
134	16	boteler	botelere.	195	14	ther was	ther nas.
134	17	encourtir	encourtire.	195	31	of Jeshu criste	to Ihesu criste
134	32	stour	stoure.	196	28	lost	lost.
136	17	socour	socoure.	197	13	theire	theire.
136	23	delyuer	delyuere.				



Page	Line	For	Read	Page	Line	For	Read
197	16	forayoures	forrayoures.	252	21	alle the	alle tho.
198	22	asonder	asondere.	253	30	vengeaunce	vengeaunce.
200	29	stour	stoure.	254	11	Br[angu]e	Bra[n]g[e].
200	30	socoure	socoure.	256	19	a[t]	a
201	14	powder	powdere.	258	12	oo[n]	oo.
201	15	a-nother	another.	260	6	gon to	gon into.
201	18	made	maden.	260	28	silneur	siluir.
202	4	thei hym	thei in hym.	260	29	theire	theire.
202	20	discounfited	discoumfited.	262	19	ansuered	ansuerde.
203	19	maner	manere.	263	note	fellowes	felowles.
204	12	nothyng	nothyng.	264	14	mischief	m[i]schief.
204	27	feire and welle	feire and wel be.	269	21	come	conne
206	20	com Geauntes	com the Geauntes.	269	31	repress	repref.
210	30	euer	euere.	270	17	and well	and we.
212	8	forest	forrest.	270	32	that thei were	that were.
212	11	blois	blis.	271	8	othere	othere.
212	13	leonpadys	lampadys.	271	10	a[nd]	a
212	14	Christofer	Christofere.	272	16	fier	fiere.
217	17	Chalis	Clialis.	274	28	there	ther.
212	22	xxxix	the xxxix.	276	5	were	weren.
212	22	xl	the xl.	278	6	Arundell	Arondell.
212	31	throweth	throwth.	282	10	castell Randoll	castell of Randoll.
213	23	had	hadde.	283	18	hundre	hundre.
214	18	fellowes	felowes.	284	28	Jeshu	Ihesu.
215	34	stour	stoure.	287	33	ligrans	li grans.
217	20	this	thise.	288	6	socour	socoure.
219	12	socour	socoure.	290	22	socour	socoure.
219	30	marveilouse	mervelouse.	291	31	socour	socoure.
219	35	douhters	doughtere.	292	22	Estranis	Estrains.
221	22	helpe neuer	helpe me neuer.	293	2	squyers	squyres.
221	34	yours	your.	293	26	comynge	comyng.
225	29	hir	hire.	294	14	slaughtere	slaughter.
227	6	precious	precieuse.	295	33	life	lif.
228	27	Ieshu	Ihesu.	296	4	tha[n]	tha.
229	33	an	fin.	296	20	receyued	receyued.
231	13	of the saignes	of saignes.	296	27	snewen	snewen.
236	10	Tradilyuant	Tradilyuaunt	299	9	smote	Note. The MS. has somte.
236	21	fier	fiere.	299	18	hire	hire.
239	16	alle	all.	301	25	swore	swor.
241	21	Ffeire	feire.	301	28	thei dide	thei seide.
242	21	ther voys	clier voys.	303	10	his	hys.
243	23	a[nd]	a	303	25	mighty	myghty.
243	26	be gode	be a gode.	305	25	is the trouthe	is trouthe.
244	14	nexte to the	nexte the.	306	5	puyssant	puyssaunt.
244	22	lette	lete.	309	31	acerne	acerue.
244	34	lose	losse.	309	34	briogne	brioque.
245	33	plente	pleinte.	310	2	cerne	cerue.
246	14	were <sup>1</sup>	were [and ignore the note].	310	33	couenaunt <sup>1</sup>	comenaunt [and ignore the note].
248	10	spred	sprad.	311	11	sechyng	seching.
248	12	kynngnenans	kynquenans.	313	32	Bregnehan	Bregnehan.
248	22	gret	grete.	313	34	their	theire.
250	17	kyng	kyng.	314	1	Nimiame	Nimiane.
				314	2	Briogne	Brioque.

Page	Line	For	Read	Page	Line	For	Read
315	4	Antoneyes	Antonyes.	378	30	her-after	here after.
317	12	the fyve	tho fyve	381	10	briogne	brioque.
317	16	honour	honoure.	381	17	Briogne	brioque.
317	31	soch	soche.	381	21	garnyyshed	garnysshed.
317	33	shull	shall.	381	25	Briogne	brioque.
318	2	out me	out mo.	381	31	Then	Than.
318	19	tentely	tentefly.	382	15	shull	shall.
319	20	appareiled	apparailled.	382	22	dissevered	disseuered.
319	31	courtesie	courteise.	382	29	delyver	delyuer.
325	3	prowese	prowessee.	382	31	vouchesafe	vouchesaf.
325	27	the shafte	tho shafte.	382	32	dissevered	disseuered.
326	29	wher-of	where-of.	383	11	dissevered	disseuered.
326	30	here-after	here-after.	383	21	have	haue.
326	35	nd seide	and seide.	383	23	succour	succoure.
327	36	the v	tho v.	383	29	tecche	teche.
328	27	smyte	smyten.	383	29	shall	shull.
328	36	com	come.	384	8	got	gost.
331	5	vengeaunce	vengaunce.	384	19	stiward	steward.
332	33	gret	grete.	384	19	dissevered	disseuered.
334	9	leshu	lhesu.	384	30	banere	baner.
336	6	ne myster	no myster.	385	16, 17	embrowded	embrowded.
337	8	other	other.	385	17	dyvers	dyuers
339	1	hym-selfe	hymself.	385	32	dissevered	disseuered.
339	26	bounte	bountee.	387	24	p[ep]le	pe[p]le.
340	4	Vlcan I-forged	Vlcanus forged.	388	4	Seigramor	Siegramor.
				390	5	there	there.
342	11	Brauremes	Biauremes.	390	23	[deed or]	[deed] or
344	20	the xiiij	tho xiiij.	391	7	[and at the last it]	[and at the laste] it.
345	20	despite	dispite.				
346	27	strife	strif.	392	4	manere	maner.
347	21	skaberke	ska[be]rke.	392	20	ffor	ffore.
347	26	a-uenture	aventure.	393	6	heire	heire.
348	35	and a-noon	but a-noon.	393	29	sangh	saugh.
349	3	norisshe	norisshid.	393	31	upon	vpon.
352	20	hem so arayed	hem arayed.	394	20	king	kinge.
354	4	of the two	of two.	396	24	hym	hem.
354	7	longere	lengere.	397	35	full	ffull.
354	31	forfeited	forfeted.	398	18	thei	thai.
355	34	assailed	assailed.	399	22, 23	vnderstode	vndirstode.
357	4	let	lete.	399	32	him	hym.
362	9	couenaunts <sup>2</sup>	comenautes [and ignore the note].	400	5	a[nd]	a
				400	7	brioke	brioske.
362	27	Guynebens	Gynebens.	400	20	my baners	iiij baners.
362	34	coniurison	coniurison.	401	17	mortall	and mortall.
363	6	sones	sone.	402	4	Antonye	Antony.
366	36	Amaunt	Amaunt.	402	19	dicounfite <sup>2</sup>	discountfite
367	11	astoyne	astonyed.			theym	the them
367	17	her-after	here-after.				[and ignore the note].
367	32	yef he hadde	yef it hadde.	402	22	were	wer.
372	3	somme	somme.	402	31	Antonye	Antony.
372	4	deffended	diffended.	403	14, 15	some-what	somehat.
373	29	segramor	segramore.	405	18	valours	valour.
376	5	hem	ham.	406	30	dide	did.
377	27	enter	entere.	408	10	maistres	maistries.
377	32	a[nd]	a	408	14	sharp	sharp.
378	28	he gan	began.	408	21	way	wey.

Page	Line	For	Read
409	14	maistres	maistries.
413	22	lordshippe	lordship.
413	33	upon	vpon.
414	1	lordshippe	lordship.
415	17	prayour	prayoure.
416	7	shull	shall.
416	10	comfort	counfort.
416	17	shall reste	shull reste.
416	27	seid	seide.
417	7	mighty	myghty.
417	12	shall	shull.
418	30	vilonye	vylonye.
420	18	Emperour	Eemperour.
420	28	most	moste.
420	29	the dredde	she dredde.
421	4	semblannce	semblaunce.
422	3	sholde he do	sholde be do.
422	11	come	comen.
422	31	gate	yate.
423	14	noon sey	noon cowde sey.
424	11	grett	grete.
424	13	theire	their.
424	29	be-heilde	behielde.
426	26	seruise	servise.
428	6	I telle	I well telle.
429	32	Emperour	Emperoure.
429	34	come	conne.
432	6	Emperour	Emperoure.
433	17	thowe	thow.
434	31	eny	ony.
435	15	seide Emperour	seide the Emperour.
435	32	shall	shull.
435	34	us	vs.
438	18	book	booke.
438	25	nyght	nygh[t].
438	27	knyght	knygh[t].
439	4	brenbas	brenbras.
439	32	myght	nyght.
440	22	hedde	heede.
441	4	surprised	supprised.
441	5	Hardogabrans	Hardogra- brans.
442	22	theire	their.
442	33	puyssant	puyssaunt.
444	7	and toke	and to toke.
444	16	departed	departen.
445	31	Scotlonde	Scotlond.
449	33	welc	well
452	6	shippe	ship.
452	10	shippe	ship.
452	22	ther	thei.
452	26	shippe	shipp.
453	31	Archebisshoppe	Archebisshop
453	35	Archebisshoppe	Archebisshop
453	36	Amnistan	Annistan.

Page	Line	For	Read
455	1	life	lif.
455	18	next	nexte.
456	8	alle	all.
458	15	how well it	how it.
459	20	overthrewe	ouerthrewe.
463	12	wife	wif.
463	28	a-perceyued	aparceyved.
466	10	disceyued	disceyved.
466	19	enderdited	enterdited.
467	2	for the	fro the.
467	33	a-baished	abaished.
468	4	worshippe	worship.
468	11	manere	manere.
468	25	iourneyes	iourneyes.
469	4	to hande	in hande.
470	28	wher-as	whereas.
471	12	necessarie	nessessarie.
471	23	hundre	hundre.
472	5	worshippe	worship.
472	17	Amnistian	Annistian.
473	14	hundre	hundre.
473	17	hundre	hundre.
473	32	hundre	hundre.
475	2	hundre	hundre.
475	15	hadde	had.
477	4	caitife	caitif.
478	5	come	comen.
478	11	shippe	ship.
479	15	on	in.
479	26	and in this	and [in] this.
479	36	recovered	recovered.
480	3	every	euery.
480	23	archebisshoppe	archebisshop.
480	24	wife	wif.
482	10	life	lif.
482	28	worshippe	worship.
482	30	us	vs.
485	6	qui	qui.
489	22	us	vs.
491	14	Galiscowde	Galascowde.
494	11	suerde	swerde.
494	27	come	com.
495	6	com	come.
496	16	ther <sup>1</sup> the knyghtes	ther ther the knyghtes [and ignore the note].
498	20	felowes	felewes.
499	23	dyuerse	dyuerse.*
499	28	send	sende.
500	5	have	haue.
501	18	com	come.
501	33	a[nd]	a
502	21	Ieshu	Ihesu.
502	25	Bisshoppe	Bisshop.
502	26	Ieshu	Ihesu.

\* Spelt dyuerse in Ms.

Page	Line	For	Read
503	32	that the best	that x the best
504	15	col[d]e	cole.
505	30	performe	parforme.
505	35	welwellinge	welwillinge.
506	36	done	don.
507	6	netther	neither.
507	9	somme	somme.
507	27	went	wente.
508	31	aperceyued	aparceyved.
509	26	Carenges	Caranges.
511	13	upon	vpon.
512	16	resceve	resceyve.
513	28	sire	sire.
514	3	weepe	wepe.
515	13	go we	gowe.
515	35	the other	the tother.
516	11	kutte the	kutte of the.
516	16	Agrauain	Agravain.
516	18	doun	down.
516	29	harme thei	harme that thei.
517	17	gate	yate.
518	30	doucrenefar	doutrenefar.
520	1	Aleon	Alain.
521	2	disorde	discourde.
521	4	hool	hooll.
521	33	Monagins	Monaguins.
522	24	under	vnder.
523	2	a[t]	a
523	21	kute	kitte.
524	36	wife	wif.
526	30	brothere	brother.
527	10	worshippe	worship.
527	34	matter	mater.
528	10	socoure	socour.
528	18	asseilled	assailed.
528	19	socoure	socour.
529	13	swore	swor.
532	35	ground	grounde.
533	23	stroke yeve	stroke cowde yeve.
533	30	handes	hondes.
534	6	bridell	bridill.
535	9	the tweyne	tho tweyne.
537	7	thou	thow.
538	25	wel	well.
539	24	nether	nother.
541	17	and he bowed	that he bowed.
541	35	vnderstode	vndirstode.
543	32	hede of	hede to.
545	8	morowe to	morowe till.
547	30	seruauntes	seruauntis.
548	27	Go we a-geins	Go ageins.
549	26	wh[ic]h	we.
549	27	ouertoke	overtoke.
549	28	euer	uer.
549	29	hours	hour.

Page	Line	For	Read
551	14	enemies	enmyes.
555	1	moche	moche.
556	1	valours	valour.
556	20	Northumbir-	Northumbir-
		londe	lond.
556	32	shall	shull.
557	29	sette	sente.
558	14	iocunde	iocounde.
560	6	manere	maner.
562	5	felowes	felowes.
564	7	hours	hour.
564	27	thers	ther.
565	11	hir	hire.
566	24	the	the.
567	34	kyng	kynge.
568	18	returne to	returne forto.
568	23	our	oure.
569	3	they thought	they that thought.
569	17	Segramore	Segramor.
569	20	sharpe	sharp.
569	26	appareiled	apparailled.
570	17	sharpe	sharp.
571	12	bledde	bledden.
572	25	Segramore	Segramor.
573	7	tothere	tother.
574	9	surprised	surprised.
574	15	own	owne.
575	18, 19	hardogabran	hardogobran.
575	24	surprised	supprised.
578	24	Ihesu	Ihesu.
578	32	hede [how]	hede how.
579	6	worshippe	worship.
579	10	many goode	many of goode.
580	27	good	goode.
580	36	oquarell	o quarell.
581	10	with these	with the these.
582	14	surprised	supprised.
583	9	renomee	renome.
583	14	destroie	distroie.
583	24	the yonge	this yonge.
584	23	savioure	saviour.
584	24	honoure	honour.
584	31	Elizer	Elyzer.
585	18	alle	all.
586	36	shall	shull.
587	6	batailes	bateiles.
587	31	there	ther.
587	32	and thei	that thei.
588	14	sharpe	sharp.
589	20	Pignoras	Pignores.
591	16	newewe	newew.
592	4	hardogabrant	hardogobrant.
592	20	honours	honour.
593	33	halfe	half.
594	20	that	pat.

Page	Line	For	Read	Page	Line	For	Read
594	24	through	thourgh.	620	3	archebisshoppe	archebisshop.
596	11	wonder	worder.	621	17	harpours	harpour.
596	21	dede	dide.	621	24	othere	other.
597	9	there	ther.	621	25	up	vp.
597	13	there	ther.	622	18	harpours	harpour.
598	27	shull haue	shull have.	623	35	here	here.
599	18	sharpe	sharp.	624	14	othere	other.
600	9	stours	stour.	625	4	comynge	comyng.
600	23	remountede	remounted.	625	9	resceyued	resceyved.
600	30	bateile	bataile.	626	31	well	wele.
601	13	Gosengos	Gosengos.	627	9	kyng	kyng.
601	34	that herde	that hadde	628	6	come	com.
			herde.	628	11	seith	seth.
602	5	wonderfull	worderfull.	628	26	which	whiche.
602	28	went	wente.	628	33	hondes	handes.
603	26	resceyued	resceyved.	629	26	vailante	vailaunt.
604	6, 7	departynge	departinge.	630	18	godde	god.
605	24	noir	noir.	630	32	grete	gret.
606	5	power	power.	631	last	swyfte	swifte.
606	33	gates	yates.	632	9	all	alle.
607	3	othere	other.	633	7	life	lif.
607	4	dide helpe	dide hem	633	27	serpentes	serpentes.
			helpe.	635	20	sharpe	sharp.
608	21	of hym	on hym.	636	12	leife	leif.
608	31	honoure	honour.	636	16	spekers	speker.
609	23	surprised	supprised.	637	13	awmeners	awmener.
609	24	acheive	acheiue.	638	6	colours	colour.
610	8	surprised	supprised.	638	29	knowe	knewe.
610	14	semblaunt	semblant.	639	17	Archebisshoppe	Archebisshop.
610	15	for	ffor.	639	26	formednesse	fonnedness.
610	17	maners	maner.	639	34	dost	doist.
611	18	euver I	euver that I.	640	18	archebisshoppe	archebisshop.
612	last	all	alle.	640	36	bettere	better.
613	21	wife	wif.	641	16	Emperours	Emperour.
613	26	honoure	honour.	641	17	maners	maner.
613	29	honoure	honour.	642	16	that he hadde	that hadde.
613	35	worshippe	worship.	642	27	honoure	honour.
613	36	curtesie	curteisie.	642	32	Emperours	Emperour.
614	1	life	lif.	643	35	iiij <sup>ml</sup>	iiij <sup>ml</sup> .
614	6	Stephene	Stephene.	645	35	com	come.
614	11	iogelours	iogelour.	646	13	brennynge	brennynge.
614	14	Arthure	Arthur.	646	19	life	lif.
614	16	Arthure	Arthur.	646	last	svfre	suffre.
615	18	streight	strieght.	648	3	up	vp.
616	13	clamours	clamour.	648	12	tho	the.
616	28	yours	your.	648	33	atame	[?] staine.
617	5	cam	com.	649	10	chyne, than	chyne and
617	7	drofs	drof.				than.
617	21	thus	this.	649	21	grete was that	grete that.
617	34	swor	swer.	649	27	mounteyne	mounteyn.
618	1	letters	letter.	650	3	when she	whens he.
618	6	hours	hour.	650	32	come	comen.
618	8	therefore	therefore.	651	16	vs manased	vs so manased
618	27	blusht	blusht.	651	24	Emperours	Emperour.
619	7	harpours	harpour.	652	24	and passed	that passed.
619	31	honoure	honour.	652	28	it werse	it the werse.
619	32	as my	as is my.	652	29	swifte	swyfte.

Page	Line	For	Read	Page	Line	For	Read
653	8	that	than.	671	17	frendes	frendes.
653	12	swyfte	swifte.	676	11	Ieshuralem	Iherusalem.
655	18	grete	gret.	676	16	renoome	renoun.
659	28	honoure	honour.	676	26	had	hadde.
660	22	powstee	powstee.	677	15	un-ethe	vn-ethe.
660	25	cristein	cristin.	678	7	messenger	messenger.
660	29	and thei ride	and ride.	679	3	time	tyme.
662	15	softely	softly.	679	12	duerfe	duerf.
662	19	powere	power.	680	1	disturue	disturne.
662	34	thousande	thowsande.	681	9	bush	bush.
663	33	to my	of my.	681	14	cerne	cerue.
664	5	montaigne	mounstaigne.	681	14	wymple	wynple.
664	7	manere	maner.	681	16	cerne	cerue.
665	6	I telle	I wele telle.	685	16	liters	liter.
665	25	there	ther.	685	35	youre	your.
666	2	undirstode	vndirstode.	686	17	others	other.
666	4	vengeaunce	vengeaunce.	687	27	honoure	honour.
666	last	in the cates	in cates.	689	3	seid Ewein	seide Sir Ewein.
667	19	hym	hy[m].	689	17	that	pat.
668	20	my-self	mysilf.	690	7	most	moste.
668	23	ye haue	[these words are repeated in MS.]	691	21	sleeves	sleues.
669	28	sergeauntes	sergauntes.	693	28	be	by.
670	3	yet sholde	yet thei sholde.	694	21	be-teche	be-teche.
670	6	sharpe	sharp.	695	12	lordshippe	lordship.
670	last	douhter	doughter.	695	17	socoure	socour.
				696	19	and countirfet	thatcountirfet.







# MERLIN THE ENCHANTER, AND MERLIN THE BARD.

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AN ESSAY, BY W. D. NASH, ESQ.,

AUTHOR OF "TALIESIN," ETC.

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IN the Arthurian romance, the figure of Merlin the prophet and enchanter stands out as distinctly as that of Arthur the warrior and king. To the necromantic skill and wise counsels of Merlin, Arthur owes his birth, his crown, and his victories. The one represents the intellect, the other the force of the world depicted in these poems. If the origin of the British Arthur has given rise to an interminable discussion, the origin and native soil of the legend of Merlin are involved in equal obscurity. In the Welsh legendary history no name is so famous as that of Merlin, with one exception perhaps, that of Taliesin. The name of Merlin especially was assigned to the numerous spurious prophecies which were produced with a political object in the fourteenth and fifteenth century. But it is more than doubtful that the traditions in which the legends have been founded are of Welsh origin, meaning by Wales the country west of the Severn.

The legend of Merlin, such as it appears in all the mediæval romances, including the present one, has reached its full phase

of development, through a set of intermediate changes, of which however we are unable to trace the progress, except at that point where it is presented to us in the form preserved in Geoffrey of Monmouth. The earliest notice of the marvellous boy, born of a virgin without the intervention of an earthly father, whose generation is ascribed to an incubus or spirit of the air, is found in the "*Historia Britonum*," attributed to Nennius, written probably as early as the eighth century. According to this earliest authority, the prophetic child was called Ambrosius; the name of Merlin was then unknown, at least is not recorded. "*Rex autem adolescenti ait; quod nomen tibi est? Ille respondit, Ambrosius vocor.*" Here a copyist or the original writer has added by way of commentary, for it clearly forms no part of the answer, "*quost brythannice embres guletic;*" "which is in the British tongue Emrys Guletic," *i.e.* King Ambrosius. The name Emrys is certainly a Welsh corruption of the Roman name Ambrosius and has no etymological basis in the Welsh language. The name Ambrosius was at the date of the "*Historia*" a well-known appellation, and is expressly given by the earlier Gildas as the name of the Roman-British leader, "*Ambrosius Aurelianus, a modest man who of all the Roman nation was then alone in the confusion of this troubled period by chance left alive,*" and under whom the Britons took up arms and made head successfully against the Saxon invaders. Some strange confusion of the legends caused the author of the "*Historia*" to identify the boy "born without a father" with the Roman-British Ambrosius. "*Rursumque rex; de qua progenie ortus es? Qui respondit; Unus ex consulibus Romanorum pater meus est.*" So Gildas had related of Ambrosius Aurelianus that "his parents, for their merit, had been adorned

with the purple." The boy, moreover, is no longer the prophet or magician, but the king, for Vortigern at once yields up to him that city on the summit of the mountain Heremus in the province of Guenet (Snowdon in North Wales), and all the provinces of the western part of Britain. Farther on we find that Ambrosius "*qui fuit rex magnus inter reges Britanniae*," bestowed two provinces, Built and Guorthegirnaim on Pascent, the younger son of Vortigern.

It would seem also that the real birth and parentage of Aurelius Ambrosius, the king, were actually unknown, and however strange it may appear that in matters of so much importance and interest for the history of the times, the truth should have been unknown at so early a date after the occurrence of these events, and at a time when Britain possessed monastic establishments and writers not devoid of learning according to the learning of the times, it is certain that the utmost confusion and obscurity prevail as well as to the personages as to the events of this troubled period. Vortimer, the son of Vortigern, Aurelius Ambrosius, and Uther Pendragon represent in some respects one and the same person. Two traditions respecting the origin of Ambrosius and Arthur were current. The one given in the Armorican book latinized by Geoffrey of Monmouth represented them as of Armorican descent, but traced their lineage to that Conan Meriadoc, a chief of Britain west of the Severn, who had accompanied Maximus to Gaul to aid him in his struggle for the imperial crown, and had with his host of Britons been settled by Maximus in the Armorican provinces. The other legend, to which I am inclined to attribute a greater amount of historical truth, connects the two brothers who are fabled to have expelled the Saxon robbers from the British soil

and in the person of their successor ruled over the whole western Roman empire, directly with Maximus himself. Certain it is that there are two Celtic—we may perhaps say two Cymric—localities in which the legends of Arthur and Merlin have been deeply implanted and to this day remain living traditions cherished by the peasantry of these two countries, and that neither of these is Wales or Britain west of the Severn. It is in Brittany and in the old Cumbrian kingdom south of the Frith of Forth, that the legends of Arthur and Merlin have taken root and flourished. Geoffrey of Monmouth represents Merlin as living in the country of the Gewisseans “at the fountain of Galabes, which he frequently resorted to.” In Brittany his resort was the forest of Broceliande, in which was also a fountain of mysterious virtue. In the *Vita Merlini*, the Caledonian Merlin is described as seated, after his calamity, by the side of a fountain of healing waters.

Fons erat in summo cujusdam vertice montis  
Undique præcinctus corulis densisque fructis  
Illic Merlinus consederat ; inde per omnes  
Spectabat silvas cursusque locosque ferarum.

The original locality of the traditions which have furnished the groundwork of these world-renowned romances is probably the Cumbrian region taken in its widest extent from the Friths of Forth and Clyde southward and westward along the borders of the Northumbrian kingdom, in which the famous exploits of the British Cymric struggle with the Northumbrian Angles became the theme of a native minstrelsy, transplanted into Brittany by the refugees from the Saxon conquest, and moulded into the romances with which we have been made acquainted, by the Norman trouvères.

M. de la Villemarqué, who has so zealously and successfully explored the legendary antiquities of Armorica, endeavours to connect the Breton name of the enchanter, *Marzin*, with a name belonging to the classical mythology, that of Marsus, a son of Circe, from whom were fabled to be descended a remarkable race or clan who were all reputed magicians, and especially serpent charmers, and mediciners. The name Marsus and Marsi became in the first centuries of the Christian æra a generic term for the serpent charmers or wizards. According to M. de la Villemarqué the name *Marddin* signified among the Welsh that which Marsus signified among the Romans; and more particularly a diviner or wizard sprung from the intercourse of a fairy or familiar spirit with a Christian virgin. In Breton the word *Marz*, derived from the ancient Marsus, signifies "a wonder," "a prodigy;" hence the enchanter or prophet is called *Marddin* or *Marzin*, "a wonderful man." These ingenious speculations do not appear to rest on any probable ground or to be supported by anything more durable than conjectural interpretations of mediæval Welsh fictions. M. Villemarqué's explanation also assumes that the names Merlin of Geoffrey of Monmouth and the romancers, and Merddin of the Welsh Genealogies, the Triads and the Breton ballads, are identical, and farther that Merddin or Marzin is the original form out of which the name Merlin has been derived. It is more probable, however, that the Breton Marzin is simply the Welsh Merddin, and that the name was brought into Armorica along with the legends which had already confounded the Ambrosian Merlin with the Cumbric bard to whom the prophetic character of the mythic "son of the Nun" had already been attributed.

The most salient points in the original legend of the Vor-

tigernian Merlin or Ambrosius, as given in "Nennius," are the opinion of the Magi of the king that the blood of a human victim was required to render stable the foundations of the building whose walls fell to the ground as often as erected, and the supernatural knowledge possessed by the child intended for the victim. This knowledge the legend appears intended to intimate, was the consequence of the parentage of the child born of the commerce of an incubus with a nun, as learnedly expounded by the chief magician Maugantius, quoting "Apuleius in his book concerning the Demon of Socrates."<sup>1</sup> Mr. Herbert, in his notes to the Irish "Nennius," has shown that the practice of auspicating the foundations of cities, temples, or other solemn structures, by human sacrifice was not unknown in the East. But it is very remarkable to find in the legend of St. Oran of Iona, in the land of the Celtic Picts, a statement of a similar practice at the foundation of a Christian church in the sixth century of the Christian era. "By the working of evil spirits the walls of the church, then being built by St. Columba, fell down as soon as they were built up. After some consultation it was pronounced, that they never could be permanent till a human victim was buried alive. Oran, a companion of the saint, generously offered himself and was interred accordingly. At the end of three days St. Columba had the curiosity to take a farewell look at his old friend, and caused the earth to be removed. To the surprise of all beholders Oran stood up and began to reveal the secrets of his prison-house, and particularly declared that all that was said of hell was a mere joke. This dangerous impiety so shocked St. Columba that, with great policy, he instantly ordered the earth to be flung in again. Poor Oran

<sup>1</sup> Geoffrey of Monmouth, Book VI., ch. 18.

was overwhelmed, and an end for ever put to his prating. His grave is near the door of the chapel of St. Oran, distinguished only by a plain red stone.”<sup>1</sup> Whether the statement be true or not, it is evident that both here and in the Vortigernian legend it is founded on a well-known and widely-spread tradition which is evidence of the actual existence of such a custom both in Britain and Ireland. St. Columba and Oran or Odhran were both Scots from the neighbouring island, though the locality of the legend is the country of the Cruithne or Picts.

The two curious ballads which have been, with others, published by M. de la Villemarqué,<sup>2</sup> depict Merlin as he has always existed in the minds of the Breton peasantry, and as he is certainly intended to be in the original legend, a magician possessed of supernatural powers, if not given to diabolic arts. The Welsh legends, on the other hand, ignore the magic and represent the enchanter as a pious Christian. The monstrous fable of the conversion of King Lucius to Christianity in the first century, and during the full dominion of the Romans in Britain, of his correspondence with Pope Eleutherius and his establishment of a Christian hierarchy in Britain, having once been accepted by the monkish writers of Welsh descent, it became necessary that all persons renowned in legend or tradition subsequently to the first century should be represented as Christians and saints. We find accordingly that Merlin Ambrosius or, as the Welsh call him, Merddin Emrys, is represented in the Triads as one of the three chief Christian bards of the Isle of Britain, the other two being the celebrated Taliesin, and that other Merlin of whom we shall presently have to speak,

<sup>1</sup> Pennant's Second Tour in Scotland, cited in Herbert's Nennius, Appendix, p. xxv.

<sup>2</sup> Barzaz Breiz.

Merddin ab Madawg Morvran. According to other Welsh authorities he was not only the bard, but the chaplain of Aurelius Ambrosius, a skilful mathematician, and the architect who constructed the "Gwaith Emrys," or work of Ambrosius, "called by the English Stonehenge," on Salisbury plain.

This fiction that Merlin, the enchanter, was a historical person, a Christian clergyman, and the bard of the king Aurelius Ambrosius, has been adopted by M. de Villemarqué, who has here certainly not displayed his usual sagacity, but has allowed himself to be led astray by the supposed authority of the Welsh Triads, to which indeed he, in common with most of the continental writers on this subject, attributes an antiquity and importance which by no means belongs to them. "Ambrosius," he says, "commenced by being the bard of Ambrosius Aurelianus, whose name he adopted. At first he filled, in the service of this king, a post similar to that filled by the poets in the service of the chiefs of the Celtic clans; but in advancing life, he resembled more the ancient British Bards or Druids. We may even assert that if any one in the British isle has represented in Christian times the *vates* of the olden time, if any one has enjoyed their privileges, known their secrets, preserved their traditions, led their mysterious life,—if any one can give an idea of these enthusiasts, at once pontiffs, sages, prophets, astrologers, magicians, poets and national musicians, it is incontestably the bard of Ambrosius Aurelianus."<sup>1</sup> M. de la Villemarqué in these observations attributes to Merlin a historical character, for which there appears to be no foundation whatever, and we ought, I think, to look upon the figure of the great enchanter as a pure work of fiction woven in with

<sup>1</sup> Myrddhin, p. 32.



the historical threads which belong to the epoch of the Saxon wars in Britain.

It is evident that in the original legend, as it existed in the eighth or ninth centuries, the wonderful child who afterwards developed into Merlin was identical with Aurelius Ambrosius, the conqueror of Vortigern. The name *Merlin*, afterwards applied, is an epithet derived from the supposed birth of the child, the offspring of a nun, Mab-leian, Mac-leian, Mab-merch-leian, a name which took the Latinized forms of Merlinus, Melinus, Merclinus. This in fact appears to be the epithet given to Myrddin Emrys in the very ancient stanza of *Englynion y Bedeu*, or "Verses of the Graves," which is printed—<sup>1</sup>

Bed An ap llian ymnewais  
Vynydd llugor llew Emreis  
Prif ddewin merdin Emreis

translated by Mr. Stephens—<sup>2</sup>

The grave of the son of the Nun,  
The companion of the lion of Emrys,  
The chief diviner Merdin Emrys is  
in Newys mountain.

The text of the stanza ought to be corrected to "un mab llian, the only son of the Nun." At what time the character of prophet and magician originally belonging to Merlin Ambrosius, the contemporary of Vortigern Aurelius Ambrosius and Arthur, was ascribed to that other Merlin called Silvestris or Caledonius, and by the Welsh Merddin Wyllt, it is difficult to decide, further than that it was in the interval between the compilation of the "History of Nennius" and that translated by Geoffrey of Monmouth.

It appears to be historically certain, that about the date of

<sup>1</sup> Myvyr. Arch. i. 65.

<sup>2</sup> Literature of the Kymry, p. 241.

the sixth century, there lived a personage who under this name of Merddin, or as it is written in the oldest Welsh form Myrtin, acquired celebrity as a bard, if not as one gifted with supernatural powers. According to the Welsh genealogies, he belonged to the same northern clan which furnished nearly all the heroes and personages of Welsh romance, with the exception of Arthur himself and his immediate ancestors, who are represented as of southern Armorican descent. So far from being of unknown or mysterious birth, the pedigree of Merddin Caledonius is as well ascertained as that of any other British celebrity. He was the son of Madog Morvryn, descended in the sixth or seventh generation from the chief of the great clan known to us by the probably corrupt name of Coel Godebog, and a kinsman of the undoubtedly historical chieftain and warrior Urien Rheged. The event which appears to have rendered him celebrated, and to have been the source of his fame as a prophet, was the circumstance of his having become insane, and consequently an object of superstitious veneration, after the disastrous battle of Arderydd, fought between the Cumbrian chief Rhydderch Hael, and another Cymric regulus Gwenddolen, the son of Ceidio. That some Cymric legend of this battle was current as late as the twelfth century, is evident from the Latin poem founded upon it, which under the title of *Vita Merlini* is attributed to Geoffrey himself. In this poem the confusion which had already begun as to the persons of the two Merlins is manifest. The Welsh had converted the name of the Roman *Mari-dunum*, "Sea-town," into *Caer-myrdin*, having altogether lost the original signification of the name. By a very ordinary etymological process this *Caer-myrdin* was derived by the monkish historical writer from the

name of Myrdin, the bard and diviner, *Caer-myrdin*, "the city of Myrdin." Hence it was to this place that the origin of the child born without a father, "Mab-leian," the son of the Nun, was referred, and hence also the Caledonian or Cumbrian Myrdin was represented as a regulus or King of Demetia in South Wales, the country in which *Caer-myrdin* was situated.

Clarus habebatur Merlinus in orbe Britannus  
Rex erat et vates, Demetarumque superbis  
Jura dabat populis, ducibusque futura canebat.

Merddin, the son of Morvran of Northern Britain, certainly had no connexion with *Caer-myrdin* (*Caermarthen* in South Wales), but, like all other British celebrities of the northern Cymric kingdom, he has been located by the Welsh writers in Britain west of the Severn.

Some authors, and among others Mr. Stephens,<sup>1</sup> whose opinions on these subjects are always entitled to respect, seem to have thought that the Emrys or Merddin Emrys of Vortigern and Merddin the son of Morvryn must be taken to have been one and the same person, and that the latter is the one whose character formed the nucleus from which the other was developed. It seems to me, on the contrary, that so far from the Caledonian Merlin having been either identical with, or the prototype of, the Vortigernian Merlin, the romantic fictions which belong to the latter has been ascribed to the Caledonian Merddin, probably for no better reason than the supposed similarity or identity of the names of the two. According to the old chronicler Ranulph Higden, in the fourteenth century, the Caledonian Merlin was buried at Bardsey, the island of the Welsh saints, in North Wales. The Ambrosian or Vortigernian Mer-

<sup>1</sup> Literature of the Kymry, p. 209.

lin, however, so far from having a known burial place, still lives in an enchanted sleep, to wake again when the time comes for the re-appearance of Arthur and his knights, to do battle once more for the crown of Britain. This distinction between the two Merlins was quaintly but clearly put by the old chronicler in his Polychronicon.

Ad Nevyn in North-Wallia  
 Est insula permodica  
 Quæ Bardisia dicitur  
 A monachis incolitur  
 Ubi tam diu vivitur  
 Quod Senior præmonitur.  
 Ibi *Merlinus* conditur  
*Silvestris* ut asseritur.  
 Duo fuerunt igitur  
 Merlini ut conjicitur  
 Unus dictus Ambrosius  
 Ex incubo progenitus  
 Ad Kaermerthyn Demeciae  
 Sub Vortigerni tempore  
 Qui sua vaticinia  
 Proflavit in Snaudonia.  
 Ad ortum amnis Conewey  
 Ad clivum montis Eryry,  
 Dinas Emreys ut comperi  
 Sonat collis Ambrosii  
 Ad ripam quando regulus  
 Vortiger sedit anxius.  
 Est alter de Albania,  
 Merlinus, quæ nunc Scotia  
 Repertus est binomius  
*Silvestris Calidonus*,  
 A silva Calidonia  
 Qua prompsit vaticinia.  
 Silvestris dictus ideo  
 Quod consistens in prælio  
 Monstrum videns in aere  
 Mente cæpit excedere

Ad silvam tendens propere,  
Arthuri regis tempore  
Prophetavit apertius  
Quam Merlinus Ambrosius.

Another point in which the two Merlins are clearly distinguished is the association with the Caledonian Merlin of a twin sister, called in the Latin "*Vita Merlini*" Ganiada, in the Welsh poems by the genuine Cymric name of Gwendydd, "the dawn" or Aurora.

We may here notice that the author of the "*Polychronicon*" was acquainted with a different tradition of the cause of the insanity of the Caledonian Merlin from that contained in the Latin "*Vita Merlini*." In the former the event is attributed to the appearance of a phantom or monster in the air, in the latter to the grief experienced by the bard at witnessing the slaughter of his kinsmen in the fratricidal strife in which he was himself engaged, and which he had assisted to provoke. Among those who fell in the battle of Ardeydd were his friend and patron Gwenddolen, and the son of his sister Gwendydd. These unfortunate transactions are frequently alluded to in the Welsh poems attributed to the Caledonian Merlin.

In the romance now published, the personal history of Merlin, and the story of his betrayal by the fairy Vivienne, are the same as those ordinarily found in these romances. Another and a different reason for the disappearance of the magician is, however, given in the Welsh Triads, which commemorates the circumstance under the title of "The Three Losses by Disappearance of the Island of Britain." 1. Gavran, son of Acddan, with his men, who went to sea in search of the Green Islands of the Floods, and nothing more was heard of them. 2. Merddin, the bard of Ambrosius, with his nine scientific

bards (*culveirdd*), who went to sea in the house of glass, and there have been no tidings whither they went. 3. Madawg, son of Owain Gwynedd, who, accompanied by three hundred men, went to sea in ten ships, and it is not known to what place they went. The story of the ship of glass was no doubt borrowed by the compiler of the Triads from some of the mediæval romances of the thirteenth century, such as that which attributes a somewhat similar voyage to Alexander, and to which there is a distinct allusion in a fragment preserved in the Myvyrian Archæology, entitled "*Anrhyfeddodau Alexander*."<sup>1</sup>

The legend of Merlin's having been enclosed in a vault, or according to M. de la Villemarqué in an enchanted bower, by his false paramour, is however the more widely spread, though the locality attributed to the event naturally varies. According to some versions of the story the forest of Broceliande in Brittany, according to others Cornwall, was the scene of the triumph of woman's wit over the sage's wisdom.

Meruelous Merling is wasted away  
 With a wicked woman woe might shee be,  
 For shee hath closed him in a craige  
 On Cornwel coast.<sup>2</sup>

This tradition of an enchanter enchained in bonds of perpetual sleep may not impossibly be of far more ancient date than is commonly imagined; and perhaps in many of the fragmentary legends preserved in the Welsh language there are the remains of sagas dating from Roman or even ante-Roman times. A very curious British tradition has been pre-

<sup>1</sup> See the text and translation in my "*Taliesin*," p. 253.

<sup>2</sup> Collection of Ancient Scottish Prophecies. Edinb. 1833.

served by Plutarch, which may perhaps lie at the root of the perpetual slumber of the renowned British enchanter.<sup>1</sup> It is as follows:—"A little time before Callistratus celebrated the Pythian games, two holy men from the opposite parts of the habitable earth came to us at Delphi,—Demetrius the grammarian from Britain, returning home to Tarsus, and Cleombrotus the Lacedæmonian. But Demetrius said that there are many desert islands scattered around Britain, some of which have the name of being the islands of genii and heroes; that he had been sent by the emperor, for the sake of describing and viewing them, to that which lay nearest to the desert isles, and which had but few inhabitants; all of whom were esteemed by the Britons sacred and inviolable. Very soon after his arrival there was great turbulence in the air, and many portentous storms; the winds became tempestuous, and fiery whirlwinds rushed forth. When these ceased, the islanders said that the departure of some one of the superior genii had taken place. For as a light when burning, say they, has nothing disagreeable, but when extinguished is offensive to many; so likewise lofty spirits afford an illumination benignant and mild, but their extinction and destruction, frequently, as at the present moment excite winds and storms, and often infect the atmosphere with pestilential evils. Moreover, that there was one island there wherein Saturn was confined by Briareus in sleep; for that sleep had been devised for his bonds; and that around him were many genii as his companions and attendants."

The expression which Plutarch reports as having been used by Demetrius the grammarian, "that sleep had been devised for his bonds," may be reasonably supposed to have been re-

<sup>1</sup> De defectu oraculorum in Mon. Hist. Brit. by Petrie and Sharpe.

peated by that traveller from statements made to him by the natives of the islands which he had visited. The tradition has never I believe been before noticed in connexion with this subject, and though it may be only a casual coincidence, the expression above referred to certainly exactly describes the device attributed to the nymph who devised sleep for the bonds of the great enchanter of the Cymric people.

D. W. NASH.

MAY, 1865.



# ARTHURIAN LOCALITIES ;

## THEIR HISTORICAL ORIGIN, CHIEF COUNTRY, AND FINGALIAN RELATIONS.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### INTRODUCTION—THE OLD ARTHUR-LAND.

ONE of the many indications of that synthetic, and reconstructive, rather than analytic, and destructive, tendency which marks this second half of the nineteenth century is the fact that historical scholars are beginning to look on popular legends and romances, not certainly with the uncritical credulity of the days before Niebuhr, but with the belief of finding in them such records of historical events as will well repay the trouble of investigating them.<sup>1</sup> It seems desirable, therefore, in this introductory chapter, in order at once to indicate the point of view of this Essay, to set-forth, in the first place, the general relation which it seeks to establish between Mediæval Romance and Pre-mediæval History. I shall, then, in the second section, bring before the reader the chief traditional Arthurian Localities of Southern Scotland, Western England, and

<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, DYER, *History of the City of Rome. Introduction.*

North-Western France. After such a survey of the Old Arthur-land, I shall, in the third section, state the question which I propose in this Essay more particularly to consider, point-out its interest, and explain the method by which I hope to attain a definitive answer. And, in conclusion, I shall state the general subjects of the succeeding chapters.

### SECTION (I).

#### *The Relation of Mediæval Romance to Pre-mediæval History.*

The age of the Arthurian, and other great Cycles of Romance, is that which, in the opinion of both the great thinkers who have chiefly influenced the intellectual development of Modern Europe,—in the opinion both of Hegel and of Comte,<sup>2</sup>—began in the eleventh, and culminated in the thirteenth century. For, about that century, it is,—as has been conclusively shown by the researches of later scholars verifying and confirming philosophical speculation,<sup>3</sup>—that the distinctively Christian, or Catholico-Feudal organization of society attains its highest perfection; that the Crusades afford their brightest examples of heroism, and chivalric magnanimity; that Art achieves its most original, most variedly beautiful, and majestic triumphs; and that Literature presents, in the Romances, at once the highest, and most popular Ideals of the Age. And thus culminating in the thirteenth century, the Mediæval Age may, as a great historic period, be defined as the five centuries from the eleventh to the fifteenth, inclusive. With the sixteenth century begins our

<sup>2</sup> "J'aime surtout qu'il (Hegel) ait vu que le monde n'a été vraiment chrétien qu'au onzième siècle." *Lettre d'A. Comte à M. d'Eichthal* in *LITTÉRÉ, Auguste Comte et la Philosophie Positive*, p. 157.

<sup>3</sup> See, for instance, LE CLERC et RENAN, *Histoire Littéraire de la France*, t. XXIV. *Quatorzième Siècle* (1862)—"Le XI<sup>e</sup> siècle avait été témoin, en philosophie, en poésie, en architecture, d'une renaissance comme l'humanité en compte peu dans ses longs souvenirs. Le XII<sup>e</sup> et le XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle avaient développé ce germe fécond, le XIV<sup>e</sup> et le XV<sup>e</sup> siècle en avaient vu la décadence." RENAN, *L'Art du Moyen Age et les Causes de sa Décadence*, in *Revue des Deux Mondes*, t. XL. p. 203 (1862).

present Modern or Transition Age; a period marked, not as was the Mediæval Age, by the general acceptance of an established system of thought, and of government; but a period distinguished by the manifestly progressing destruction of all the political forms, and intellectual foundations of the social system of the Age preceding it, and a no less certain, though perhaps less manifest preparation of a new and higher system of social organization.

But for a thousand years before the opening of the Mediæval Age, Christianity had been working in the European world, completing the destruction of the antique system of thought and of society, and laying the foundations of a new world-system. The first half of this millenium I would distinguish as the Imperial Age. For it is the age of the Roman Empire of the East and West. It is the age also of the Apostles, the Fathers, and the Martyrs of Christianity. And the latter five hundred years of this first millenium of the Christian era I would distinguish as the Barbarian, or Pre-mediæval Age. The Roman Empire no longer extends its sway over Northern and Western Europe; and the various tribes of barbarians,—Celtic and Teutonic,—are engaged in perpetual conflicts,—miserable and disheartening when looked at in their details, but, regarded as a whole, found to be in their great issues conflicts that laid the foundations of the nationalities of a New Europe.<sup>4</sup> For, by the end of this age, there has been constituted in France the first of the Romanic or Neo-Latin nationalities; in England, a preponderatingly Teutonic; and, in Scotland, a predominantly Celtic nationality.<sup>5</sup> And

<sup>4</sup> Compare OZANAM, *Civilization au Cinquième Siècle* t. II. p. 315 et seq.

<sup>5</sup> As a writer of such authority as Mommsen has said "Solche Eigenschaften guter Soldaten und schlechter Bürger erklären die geschichtliche Thatsache, dass die Kelten alle Staaten erschüttert und keinen gegründet haben," (*Römische Geschichte* B. II., K. IV., b. I., s. 329, *English Translation*, v. I., p. 359), one would not be justified in thus speaking of the consolidation of the tribes of North Britain into a predominantly Celtic nationality without, at least, briefly referring to one's proofs. These are to be found in the unquestionable facts, firstly, that, both in number, and in extent of territory occupied, Celts,—Cymry, Picts and Scots, or Gael,—were the chief basis of the Scottish nationality; secondly, that it was by one of the

as this Pre-mediæval Age was occupied by the elemental wars of the tribes ultimately consolidated in these three national unities ; so, the Mediæval Age was filled with the contests of these nations with each other, and with the rising nationalities around them. But, on taking a wide view of European history, we shall see these Mediæval wars preparing, as all conflict does, in fact, prepare, a higher unity. And, as the name of Scotland is first heard towards the close of the Pre-mediæval wars of the tribes of North Britain ; so, the idea of Europe emerges from the Mediæval conflict of the races of this Asiatic promontory.

Now that which, I trust, will be found the most clearly established, as it is the most general view in this Essay maintained, is

Celtic tribes, the Scots, namely, or Gael, that, not only all the other Celtic elements of the population, but the Saxon element also, was, towards the end of the Pre-mediæval age, united under one monarch, whose dynasty, or the heirs of whose dynasty, lost their sovereignty only with the fall of the Stuarts, and the substitution of the present German Family ; and, thirdly, that, in the opinion of the most competent authorities, not only were the tribes of North Britain thus united into the Scottish nationality by a Celtic race ; not only, that is, have we here, at least, an exception to what Mommsen declares thus absolutely to be an historical fact, "that the Celts have shaken all states and have founded none," but the language of Scotland, both in the Highlands and Lowlands, except a narrow strip of sea-coast, was, at least till the reign of Malcolm Caenmore (1058-1093), and the opening of the Mediæval Age, Gaelic. See INNES, *Sketches of Early Scottish History*, pp. 85-6 ; compare also ROBERTSON, *Scotland under Her Early Kings*, vol. I., pp. 125, et seq. and v. II., pp. 142-3, and p. 374 ; and TYTLER, *History of Scotland*, v. II., p. 188, et seq. That, during the Mediæval Age, a Teutonic dialect, allied to the English, took the place of Norman-French, and of Gaelic, at the Court, and further extended itself in the Lowlands, was due to many causes. Among these, may, for instance, be named, the marriage of Malcolm Caenmore with the sister of Edgar Atheling, and the encouragement thence given to the settlement in Scotland of Saxon refugees from the Norman conquest ; the policy of the Scottish monarchs generally in encouraging the settlement both of Saxons and Normans, as allies against their own turbulent subjects ; and the naturally preponderating influence of the inhabitants of sea-coasts. See note 16 *infra* p. xliii\*. And yet to this hour one may, in a day's journey from such a vast centre of an English-speaking population as Glasgow, find the simplest English question answered with "No English !" Celts have, therefore, once, at least, succeeded in *founding*, though not in long maintaining, a state with a purely Celtic organization and language. But have Saxons founded or long maintained a State with a purely Teutonic organization ? These current generalizations about the Celts will seldom bear being strictly examined. See ROBERTSON, as above, *Appendix B. The Celt and the Teuton*, v. II. p. 197 et seq.

that in the Romances of the Mediæval Age, and more particularly in those of the Arthurian Cycle, there is not only a mythological element, as I hope in another Essay fully to show ; but that there is a very important historical element ; a record, legendary indeed, and hardly to be deciphered for its extraordinary flourishes, but still a record of certain real, and not purely fictitious characters, incidents, and conflicts of the Premediæval Age. And if this should be established, we shall certainly have a result which will reward the labour of this investigation of Arthurian localities ; a result not only for the general Mediæval history of European literature ; but for the Pre-mediæval history of that particular region in which our researches may localize the events from which the historic element of the Arthurian Romances is derived. Of no slight historic interest can it be to show that Arthur and Merlin are neither purely mythic personages, nor mere poetic creations ; but that the legends and traditions that the Mediæval trouveres and troubadours wrought-out into their magnificent romances, were records of actual Pre-mediæval personages, whose characters and histories had forcibly impressed the popular imagination ; and that the country where the heroic Arthur fought, and the forests where the wild Merlin wandered, can be now, on no doubtful evidence, pointed-out. The one, no doubt, was but a leader of barbarians, and the other but a barbarian compound of madman and poet, of prophet and bard. But it is these very circumstances that give their characters an historic interest in relation to their Mediæval idealisation.

And not only shall we thus see the Mediæval connected with the Pre-mediæval Age in the relation between the Romantic Ideals of the one, and the Traditional Heroes of the other ; but, in showing that the Mediæval Romances had an historic element, and that the age and country of those characters who lived-again in the Romantic Ideals, can be now assigned ; we shall connect also with that Pre-

mediæval, our present Modern Age. For there are many indications, not only in the needs of the time, and in the characteristic advantages of the Arthurian Mythology; but in the actual fact of the use already made of it by so many modern poets;<sup>6</sup> that the Mediæval Romances of King Arthur will be the chief formal material of the New Poesy. To show, therefore, that these Mediæval Romances had in them a definite historical element, is to give that New Poesy also an historic basis; to discover for its characters and incidents "a local habitation;" and to connect by a new bond the Present, not only with the Mediæval, but with the Pre-mediæval Age.

Another, a still higher, a moral interest this investigation seems also to me to have; and I trust that, before entering upon it, I may be pardoned for alluding for a moment to these higher, these moral aspects of our subject. Let me but desire my readers to reflect how the establishment of such a relation, as will here occupy us, between Mediæval Romance and Pre-mediæval history, brings home the great idea of the continuity of human development; how it shows the traditions of the barbarian conflicts of one age taken up by the next, and used as the formal material of the creations of a magnificent poesy; how it shows the rude lives of an earlier period living again in the ideal heroes of succeeding ages; how it shows that, though the tribes of whom these traditions are the historic memorials, were conquered, absorbed and extinguished as separate political organizations, yet they died not; how it shows that, in the succession of Humanital, as in the sequence of Natural phenomena, there is, in fact, no such thing as Death; that there is but Decease only, and Transformation. And thus it is but a great historic truth mythically expressed, that legend of Merlin's prophecies from his Tomb. "Lady," replied Merlin, "the flesh upon me will be rotten

<sup>6</sup> I need here only recall Mr. Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, Mr. Arnold's *Tristram and Iseult*, Mr. Morris's *Defence of Guenivere*, Edgar Quinet's epic *Merlin*, and Richard Wagner's "Poèmes d'Opera," *Lohengrin*, and *Tristan et Iseult*.

before a month shall have past; but my spirit will not be wanting to all those who shall come here.”<sup>7</sup>

“Vive la voce; e come chiara emerge,  
Udir potrai da la marmorea tomba;  
Che le passate e le future cose,  
A chi gli domandò sempre rispose.”<sup>8</sup>

#### SECTION (II).

#### *The Arthurian Localities of Southern Scotland, Western England, and North-Western France.*

Let us now proceed to our preliminary survey of the traditional Arthur-land. Localities with Arthurian names, or Arthurian traditions attached to them, are to be found, in greater or less abundance, in Scotland, in Wales, Somersetshire, and Cornwall, and in Brittany. In Scotland, there is still pointed out in the churchyard of Meigle, on the borders of Perthshire and Forfarshire, an ancient sculptured stone said to mark “Ganore’s Grave,” or the tomb of Guenivere. Arthur’s Seat still connects Edinburgh with the mythic hero’s fame. And at Drummelzier on the Tweed is still to be seen the perennial thorn that has not yet ceased, in an offshoot at least, to bloom over the grave of Merlin. How many more Arthurian localities are to be found in Scotland will, in the third chapter of this essay, be shown in detail. Postponing, then, any further notice of the Arthurian localities of Southern Scotland, I shall at once proceed to those of Western England.

In North Wales, between Mold and Ruthin, near Colomendy Lodge, in Flintshire, is Maen Arthur, a stone which, in popular fancy, bears an impression of the hoof of the hero’s steed. Between Mold and Denbigh is Moel Arthur, an ancient British fort, defended by two ditches of great depth. Near Denbigh, “there is, in the Paroch of *Llansannan* in the Side of a Stony Hille, a Place wher there be 24 Holes or Places in a Roundel for Men to sitte in, but sum lesse, and some bigger, cutte oute of

<sup>7</sup> *Prophecies de Merlin*, F. 76.

<sup>8</sup> *ARIOSTO, Orlando Furioso*, c. III. s. 11.

the mayne Rok by Mannes Hand; and there Children and Young Men cumming to seke their Catelle use to sitte & play. Sum caulle it *the Rounde Table*. Kiddes use ther communely to play & skip from Sete to Sete.”<sup>9</sup> The remains of what would appear to have been a Roman Camp overlooking Redwharf Bay, or Traeth Coch, in Anglesea, is locally called Burdd Arthur, or Arthur’s Round Table. Also in Anglesey, in the grounds of Llwydiarth, a seat of the Lloyd family, is a famous Maen Chwff, or rocking stone, called Arthur’s Quoit. In Caernarvonshire, to the south of Snowdon, “overlooking the lower end of Llyn y Ddinas, is Dinas Emrys, a singular isolated rock, clothed on all sides with wood, containing on the summit some faint remains of a building defended by ramparts,” with which a legend of Merlin and Vortigern is connected:—

“And from the top of Brith, so high and wondrous steep,  
Where Dinas Emris stood, shewed where the serpents fought,  
The White that tore the Red; from whence the prophet wrought  
The Briton’s sad decay then shortly to ensue.”<sup>10</sup>

In this same county, at Llyn Geirionydd, as also at Aberystwith, and other localities on the Cardiganshire coast, Taliessin, another of the four great bards of the sixth century, is said to have been found on the shore, like Moses in the bulrushes, by Gwyddno Garanhir.<sup>11</sup> And, on the south of Caernarvon Bay, is Nant Gwrtheryn, the Hollow of Vortigern, a precipitous ravine by the sea, said to have been the last resting place of the usurper,—so, at least, he is represented in the *Romance of Merlin*,<sup>12</sup>—when he fled to escape the rage of his subjects on finding themselves betrayed to the Saxons. In Merionethshire, there is a river with the Arthurian name of Camlan flowing into the Eden. And the Church of Llanover, near the Bala Lake in this county, is said to have been the burial place of

<sup>9</sup> IRLAND, *Itinerary*, v. V. pp. 62, 63.

<sup>10</sup> DRAYTON, *Poly-Olbion, Song the Tenth*. Works, v. III. p. 843.

<sup>11</sup> GUEST (Lady Charlotte), *The Mabinogion*, v. III. p. 360.

<sup>12</sup> Chapters II. and III. (Early English Text Society).



one of the four most famous bards of the Arthurian Age, Llywarch Hen, or Llywarch, the Aged. To the address of this bard to his Crutch Mr. Arnold refers in illustration of "the Titanism of the Celt, his passionate, turbulent, indomitable reaction against the despotism of fact."<sup>13</sup>

"O my Crutch! is it not the first day of May? The furrows, are they not shining? The young corn, is it not springing? Ah! the sight of thy handle makes me wroth."

In South Wales, near the turnpike road from Reynoldstone to Swansea, on the north slope of Cefn Bryn, there is the famous cromlech called Arthur's Stone. About five miles to the south of Brecon on the Usk, rise the twin peaks of the Beacons called Arthur's Chair. On an eminence adjoining the park of Mocras Court, in Brecknockshire, is a large and peculiar kind of British cromlech, called Arthur's Table. And at the once famous city, now the decayed village, of Caerleon upon Usk,—the *Isca Silurum* of Antoninus, where the second Augustan Legion was, during a long period, in garrison,—are the remains of a Roman Amphitheatre, in a bank of earth heaped up in an oval form sixteen feet high, and now also called Arthur's Round Table. Some four miles from Caermarthen, itself said to be derived, but quite erroneously,<sup>14</sup> from Caer Merddin, the city of Merlin, is Merlin's Grove, and Hill. And on the bank of the Towy, within the domain of Dynevor Park, Spenser has placed the cave of Merlin:—

"There the wise Merlin, whilom wont, they say,  
To make his wonne low underneath the ground,  
In a deep delve far from the view of day,  
That of no living wight he might be found,  
When so he counselled with his sprites around.

. . . . .

<sup>13</sup> *On the Study of Celtic Literature*, p. 155. See also *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 326.

<sup>14</sup> NASH, *Merlin the Enchanter and Merlin the Bard*, p. x. Caer Myrdin, or Merddin is a Welsh corruption of the Roman *Mari-dunum*, "Sea-town." Compare SELDEN's Note on the Fourth Song of Drayton's *Poly-Olbion*, Works, v. II. p. 746, and v. III. p. 852.

It is a hideous, hollow, cave-like bay,  
 Under a rock that has a little space  
 From the swift Tyvi, tumbling down apace  
 Amongst the woody hills of Dynevowr." <sup>15</sup>

In Somersetshire, may first be mentioned Bath, the *Aquæ Solis* or *Sulis* of the Romans. But the reasons against here localizing the Arthurian Battle of Badon Hill mentioned by Nennius are well stated by Mr. Guest, <sup>16</sup> though, as will be seen hereafter, I cannot agree with his suggestion, "Why may not the Mons Badonicus be the Badbury of Dorsetshire?" <sup>17</sup> Between Castle Cary and Yeovil, on the escarpment of the oolite, abutting on the plain which extends to Ilchester, is Cadbury, "a hill of a mile compass at the top, four trenches encircling it, and twixt every of them an earthen wall; the content of it, within about twenty acres full of ruins and reliques of old buildings. . . . 'Dii boni (saith Leland) quot hic profundissimarum fossarum? quot hic egestæ terræ valla? quæ demum præcipitia? atque ut paucis finiam, videtur mihi quidem esse et Artis et Naturæ miraculum.' Antique report makes this one of Arthur's places of his Round Table." <sup>18</sup> Cadbury is mentioned in old records under the name of Camelot, a name still perpetuated in the adjoining villages of Queen's Camel and West Camel. In the fourth ditch is a spring called King Arthur's Well. And the relics found in the fortress prove it to have been occupied by the Romans, though, as we have seen, tradition assigns its origin to King Arthur, who, in the opinion of Camden, probably fought a battle with the Saxons in this neighbourhood. The other famous Arthurian locality of Somersetshire is Glastonbury, which, once encircled by the arms of the Brue, or Brent, formed the Roman Insula Avalonia, or Isle of Avalon.

<sup>15</sup> "*Færie Queens*," iii. 3. Compare also DRAYTON, *Poly-Olbion, Song the Fifth* Works, v. II. pp. 756-7.

<sup>16</sup> *Early English Settlements in South Britain*, p. 35.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.* p. 36.

<sup>18</sup> SELDEN, Note on Drayton's *Poly-Olbion, Works*, v. II. p. 724.

"O three times famous Isle, where is that place that might  
Be with thyself compared for glory and delight,  
Whilst Glastenbury stood ? exalted to that pride,  
Whose monastery seemed all other to deride.

. . . . .  
To whom didst thou commit that monument to keep  
When not Great Arthur's tomb, nor holy Joseph's grave,  
From sacrilege had power their holy bones to save ?" <sup>19</sup>

Selden's annotation on this passage seems worth giving, at least in part. "Henry the Second in his expedition towards Ireland entertained by the way in Wales with bardish songs, wherein he heard it affirmed that in Glastenbury (made almost an isle by the river's embracements) Arthur was buried betwixt two pillars, gave commandment to Henry of Blois, then abbot, to make search for the corps, which was found in a wooden coffin (Girald saith oaken, Leland thinks alder), some sixteen foot deep ; but after they had digged nine foot, they found a stone on whose lower side was fixt a leaden cross (crosses fixt upon the tombs of old Christians were in all places ordinary) with his name inscribed, and the letter side of it turned to the stone. He was then honoured with a sumptuous monument, and afterwards the skulls of him and his wife Guinever were taken out (to remain as separate relics and spectacles) by Edward Longshanks and Eleanor . . . . Worthily famous was the Abbey also from Joseph of Arimathea (that *Ευσχάρμων βουλευτής*, as S. Mark calls him) here buried, etc." <sup>20</sup> But, notwithstanding the inscription on the leaden cross, "Hic jacet sepultus inclytus rex Arthurus in insula Avalonia ;" or as it is otherwise more epigrammatically given, "Hic jacet Arthurus, Rex quondam, Rexque futurus ;"—

"His Epitaph recordeth so certaine  
Here lieth K. Arthur that shall raigne againe ;"—" <sup>21</sup>

it is hardly necessary to add that there is almost every reason to

<sup>19</sup> DRAYTON, *Poly-Olbion, Song the Third, Works*, v. II. p. 712.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid. v. II. p. 722.

<sup>21</sup> LIDGATE, *Boccace Lib. VIII. Cap. 24*.

believe that this extraordinary "find" could have been nothing but a pious fraud, *in majorem monasterii gloriam*.<sup>22</sup>

In Cornwall (*Cornu Galliæ*), Camelford and Tintagel have a pre-eminence in Arthurian tradition similar to that maintained by Cadbury and Glastonbury in Somersetshire. Not far from Camelford is a little entrenchment, known as Arthur's Hall. On the Camel or Alan (*Crum hayle*, crooked river) the final battle is said to have been fought between Arthur and his rebellious nephew, or rather, bastard son, Mordred.

"Let Camel of her course & curious windings boast,

. . . her proper course that loosly doth neglect,

As frantic, ever since her British Arthur's blood,

By Mordred's murtherous hand was mingled with her flood."<sup>23</sup>

Between Camelford and Launceston, on Wilsey Downs, is Warbelow Barrow, an ancient fortification of considerable size, in the centre of which is a large mound, popularly called King Arthur's Grave. At Slaughter Bridge, between Camelford and Tintagel, on the Bristol Channel, a stone, with the hero's name on it, is pointed out. Tintagel, though in the romances of Sir Tristrem it is made the Castle of King Mark, is the reputed birthplace and residence of Arthur.<sup>24</sup> Some of the rock basins in the slate of the promontory are fantastically called King Arthur's Cups and Saucers; and south of Tintagel, near St. Colomb, is the eminence of Castle an Dinas, or the earth-fort, crowned with an elliptical doubly entrenched camp of six acres, which tradition affirms to have been the hunting-seat of King Arthur, who, according to the legends, chased the wild deer on the Tregon Moors. Some miles north of Liskeard are several rocky tors, one group of which is called King Arthur's Bed (*Beth*, i.e., Grave?). Lyonesse, the possession of Sir Tristrem, is said

<sup>22</sup> See, however, Mr. Pearson's note, *infra*, p. clii\*.

<sup>23</sup> DRAYTON, *Poly-Olbion, Song the First, Works*, v. II. p. 660.

<sup>24</sup> An account of a recent visit to it is given by the author of *John Halifax in Good Words* for January, 1867; *In King Arthur's Land; a Week's Study of Cornish Life*. Jennifer (*Guenivere*?) is mentioned as a common name.

to have been that submerged tract of slate by which the Scilly Isles, the outlying members of that series of granitic highlands which extends through Cornwall to Dartmoor, were traditionally united to the mainland; and two of the most eastern isles of this little archipelago are distinguished by the names of Great, and Little Arthur.

Crossing the Channel, we find in Little Britain, or Brittany, another district boasting itself to be the cradle of romance. In the Cornuailles and Leonais, two of its ancient divisions, we have another Cornwall and Lyonesse. In the latter, is situated Kerduel, where Arthur is said to have held his Court. A short distance off the coast is the island of Aiguilon or Avalon, where, as in the *Insula Avalonia* of Glastonbury, he is said to have been buried. And near this also is Mount St. Michael, with its legend of the hero's rescue of the fair Helena, the niece of Hoel, from the hateful embraces of the giant.

“ . . . great Rython's self he slew in his repair  
Who ravish'd Howell's niece, young Hellena the fair;  
And for a trophy brought the giant's coat away,  
Made of the beards of kings.”<sup>25</sup>

“On the banks of the Elorn are still pointed out the sites of the castles and forts of Launcelot du Lac, and of La Blonde Yseult. In the Morbihan, the next Celtic division to that of Cornuailles, is shown the Forest of Broceliande, where Merlin ‘drees his weird;’ and there also is the consecrated fountain of Balanton, which is still believed to possess miraculous properties. There also may be found Caradoc and Madoc, and other names peculiar to the ancient legends of British History.”<sup>26</sup>

#### SECTION (III).

*The Question proposed, its Interest, and the Method of its Solution.*

Thus we find Arthurian localities in all the five districts, in modern times known as Southern Scotland, Wales, Somersetshire,

<sup>25</sup> DRAYTON, *Poly-Olbion, Song the Fourth, Works*, v. II. p. 735.

<sup>26</sup> FORBES-LESLIE, *The Early Races of Scotland and their Monuments*, v. I. p. 12.

Cornwall, and Brittany. And hence the first result of a general inquiry into Arthurian topography is the outlining of a continuous region from the Grampians, in Scotland, to the Loire, in France, distinguished by localities with Arthurian names, or Arthurian traditions attached to them. This region may be briefly described as including what is now the south of Scotland, the west of England, and the northwest of France.<sup>27</sup> And the question which I propose in this Essay mainly to consider, and, if possible, definitively to answer, is:—Which of these three divisions of the old Arthur-land, that of Scotland, of England, or of France, was the original birth-land of Arthurian tradition?

To show the importance of this question, and to excite an interest in its solution, I trust that the following brief remarks will be sufficient. In the first place, then, it opens up to the philosophic historian the general question of the origin of traditional topographies; a question which has not only not been, as yet, so far as I am aware, treated scientifically, except with respect to some of the Syrian localities of Christian tradition; but which is connected in its general bearings with all those other questions of origin which so directly affect the validity of popular religious beliefs. But, farther, it is an inquiry, the result of which will be to draw back the veil from ancient centuries of the history of mankind, and to connect, with still existing monuments, long past events of that struggle for existence, which, of all others, must chiefly interest us of the human race.

But, besides these general results, the inquiry on which we would now enter, ought, at length, to present us with the local historical

<sup>27</sup> Arthurian traditions, it must, however, be noted, attach also to some places beyond the limits of the region thus described, and rather in the south, than the west of England. For instance,

“And for great Arthur's seat, her Winchester prefers,

Whose old Round Table yet she vaunteth to be hers;”

sings Drayton in the Second Song of the *Poly-Olbion*, so often above quoted (*Works*, v. II. p. 691).

basis of that vast cycle of Romance the large place of which in the history of European literature, and the great influence of which on the development of modern civilization, is now more or less fully acknowledged. Yet, further, if I am right in the conclusion that the two chief elements determining the form of the Mediæval Arthurian Romances are to be found in historical events of the Premediæval Age, and in Celtic myths, which may be traced back to the earliest forms of speech distinctive of the Indo-European Races,<sup>28</sup> this inquiry will appear as the necessary preliminary to the investigation of the Arthurian branch of a mythology which is second in interest only to that which has gathered round the historical facts of Christian tradition. And yet, further, if, as seems probable, not only from their special characteristics, but from the use increasingly made of them, the Arthurian Romances are destined to become the chief formal material of European poesy ; such an inquiry as the following should, in determining the original locality of Arthurian tradition, fix also the site of a new classic land, in which, as of old, in Greece, the creations of poesy in all its different forms, may have a common "local habitation," and gain all the advantages, thus only given, of vivid realization in the popular fancy.

For those to whom the force of these considerations in illustration of the importance of the question above proposed, and the interest of its solution, may not be at once apparent, let me add, what may to some antiquarians be the most stimulating circumstances of all, the facts, simply, that this question has been eagerly discussed ; that the answer here given, though it has been suggested, cannot be held to have been hitherto proved ;<sup>29</sup> and that

<sup>28</sup> In the same way as the linguistic origin of the Classic myths has been explained by modern philology. See MAX MÜLLER, *Lectures on the Science of Language*, and *Chips from a German Workshop*.

<sup>29</sup> Chalmers remarks that "the valourous Arthur of History and the redoubtable Arthur of Romance has supplied the topography of North Britain with such signi-

the method of proof which has been followed is new, inasmuch

ficant names, as seem to imply, either that the influence of the real Arthur was felt, or the remembrance of the fictitious Arthur was preserved, for many ages after the Pendragon had fallen by the insidious stroke of treachery from the kindred hand of Mordred." *Caledonia*, v. I. p. 244. Sir Walter Scott, in a note on his *Vision of Don Roderick, Introduction*, s. iv., observes that "much of the ancient poetry preserved in Wales refers less to the history of the Principality to which that name is now limited, than to events which happened in the north-west of England, and south-west of Scotland, where the Britons for a long time made a stand against the Saxons." And he further refers to the connection of Aneurin, Llywarch Hen, and Merlin with Scotland rather than with Wales. Compare also his introduction to *Sir Tristrem*, pp. xxxiv-viii.; and to *Thomas the Rhymer*, Part II. in *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*. A writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of 1842 was, however, the first, I believe, distinctly to maintain that "the seat of Arthur's power was . . . . adjacent to the Saxon settlement of Lothian;" and that "in connection with that settlement his victories are recorded by Nennius." And he adds that the mistake of assigning to Arthur a kingdom in the south-western extremity of the island "was possibly confirmed by the casual similarity of name between Arthur's real subjects in the north, and those assumed for him in the Cornish promontory, the former bearing the designation of Damnii, the latter of Dumnonii" v. XVII. p. 486. But the incompleteness of the evidence advanced in support of this conclusion was probably the reason of its attracting but little attention. Mr. Nash also asserts, but does not even attempt to prove a theory similar to that in this essay maintained. "The original locality," he says, "of the traditions which have furnished the groundwork of these world-renowned romances (of King Arthur) is probably the Cumbrian region taken in its widest extent from the Firths of Forth and Clyde southward and westward along the borders of the Northumbrian kingdom, in which the famous exploits of the British Cymric struggle with the Northumbrian Angles became the theme of a native minstrelsy, transplanted into Brittany by the refugees from the Saxon conquest, and moulded into the romances with which we have been made acquainted by the Norman trouveres." *Merlin the Enchanter and Merlin the Bard*, p. iv. And Mr. Burton at least admits that, "if any reality could be extracted from the Arthurian histories, Scotland would have its full share, since much of the narrative comes northward of the present border." *History of Scotland*, v. I. pp. 174-7. On the other hand, however, Dr. Guest identifies Arthur with Owen Finddu, the son of Aurelius Ambrosius, and places him in the south-west of England; remarking that his being called the son of Uter arose from Geoffrey of Monmouth's having mistaken the meaning of the term applied to him by Nennius, *map uter*, "the terrible boy, because he was cruel from his childhood." *Welsh and English Rule in Somersetshire after the Capture of Bath*, A.D. 577. *Archæological Journal*, 1859, p. 123 et seq. And Mr. Pearson also makes Arthur sovereign of a territory in the south-west of England of which Camelot, or Cadbury, in Somersetshire, was the capital. *Early and Middle Ages of England*, v. I. p. 56-8. See also *Bishop Percy's Folio Manuscript*, v. I. pp. 401-4; and *infra* p. . . And Col. Forbes-Leslie, without appearing to have a suspicion that Scotland may be the true birthland of Arthurian tradition, says: "I do not presume to give an opinion on the rival claims of Wales, Cornwall, and Armorica, to the domicile of King Arthur and his Paladins, and Merlin with his magical powers." *Early Races of Scotland and their Monuments*, v. I. p. 167 (1866).



as it is an adaptation of physical methods to antiquarian researches.

That method has consisted, first, in examining the results of the modern scientific criticism of Celtic history, political, and literary, in as far as these results more particularly bear on the definite localization of events which may have been the origin of those traditions which, in our investigation of Arthurian topography, we have found to be so widely diffused. Our deduction from these critical results has been that it was in Southern Scotland, and neither in Western England, nor in North-western France that the Arthurian traditions, still attached to so much of the topography of all these districts, originated. This deduction, however, standing alone, could hardly in any case, and especially considering the scantiness of the materials on which it is founded, be received as satisfactory scientific proof of the historical origin of Arthurian localities. And hence the necessity of an inductive verification of our deductive theory. How was such a verification to be gained?

By the second step of the method which has guided these researches. This was founded on the postulate, or assumption, that, except special reasons could be shown to the contrary, that district in which the Arthurian traditions had their local historical origin would be found to be the chief country of Arthurian localities. I therefore noted, in the course of a great many perambulations of the region thus critically indicated, all the localities there to be found with Arthurian names, or Arthurian traditions attached to them. The general result of these journeys was a determination of that district of Southern Scotland and the English Border, in which the Arthurian traditions had, according to our critical theory, had their local origin, as, to this day, the chief country of Arthurian localities. This, on the principle above stated, I seemed justified in regarding as the required inductive verification. And thus it is in the fact of the accordance of the deduction from the results of literary and

historical criticism, with the induction from the results of topographical investigation, that the main proof of the thesis in this essay maintained, namely, that Scotland is the original seat of Arthurian tradition, consists.

But our conclusions both as to the historical origin and the chief country of the Arthurian localities, having been found to be thus accordant and mutually confirmatory in their indication of Southern Scotland, it did not appear that our investigation would be scientifically complete without an examination of the relations of the Scottish Arthurian topography to that Fingalian topography which has been long known to be possessed by Scotland, as well as Ireland. Nor will, I trust, this third step in our investigation of Arthurian localities be thought other than a necessary part of our discussion of Arthurian localities, if, instructed by the results of that most powerful of modern scientific instruments, the Comparative Method, one has been led to see how necessary is the study of the Fingalian Myths in the scientific investigation of the Arthurian Romances; if one considers the importance of the fact that the local relations, discovered in Scotland, of Arthurian to Fingalian tradition, are nowhere else to be found; and if, especially, I am successful in showing in these unique relations a confirmation of the theory here maintained as to the original birthland of the traditions of King Arthur.

Having thus, in this first, or introductory chapter, set-forth the general relation which I seek to establish between Mediæval Romance and Pre-mediæval History; having briefly noted the chief traditional localities of the Old Arthur-land, considered as a continuous European region; and having stated the method by which I propose to determine the special district in which Arthurian traditions originated, the subjects of the succeeding chapters will be as follows. In the next, or second chapter, those results of the

criticism of Cymric history will be detailed, from which the deduction, as to the origin of Arthurian localities, is drawn. In the third chapter, a summary account will be given of the very numerous perambulations of the Arthurian district of Scotland, from the result of which arises the verificative induction as to the chief country of Arthurian localities. In the fourth chapter it will be shown how variously suggestive, and confirmatory of the conclusions of the foregoing chapters, are those Fingalian relations of the Arthurian topography of Scotland, presented by the examination of Pictish memorials. And, fifthly, I shall, in conclusion, briefly advert to considerations that should seem to give more than merely antiquarian interest to this discovery of the true, or original country of Arthurian tradition.

Let me now, then, endeavour to show that that part of those far Islands of the West where terminated, until their new exodus in the present age,<sup>30</sup> and where were reunited, at length, the two great northern and southern streams of Celtic migration from the Asian birthland of the Aryan tribes;—that part of the Old Arthur-land in which the Pre-mediæval events which are the chief historical bases of the Arthurian Romances of the Mediæval *trouweres* and *troubadours* actually occurred, and where the tradition of these events has to this day the most numerous topographical monuments;—is that district of the largest of the British Isles which, bounded on the north by the chain of the Grampians, and on the south by the Tyne and the Derwent, was formerly known as *Y Gogledd*, or “the North,” and which I would distinguish as Arthurian Scotland.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup> See BURY (Lord), *Exodus of the Western Nations*.

<sup>31</sup> This term is thus used to include part of what is now England. But, I think, justifiably: not only because it is a more convenient, though, perhaps, less exact term than “Southern Scotland and the English Border;” but because the dominion of the early Scottish kings extended, though precariously, beyond the present border; and because Cumberland and Northumberland were not finally annexed to the Crown of England till the third of Henry II. See HINDE, *On the Early History of Cumberland*, in *The Archaeological Journal*, 1859, p. 217 et seq.

Let me, now,—but without any assumption, in so obscure a matter, of absolutely proving my case,—bring forward in due order those results of critical and topographical research which appear to me to support each other in the conclusion that Southern Scotland and the English Border is the true historical region of the Old Arthur-land.

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## CHAPTER II.

### THE HISTORICAL ORIGIN OF ARTHURIAN LOCALITIES AS DEDUCED FROM THE CRITICISM OF CYMRIC HISTORY.

IN attempting to answer the question before us as to the birth-land of Arthurian tradition, I shall, in this chapter, briefly state those results of a critical examination of Cymric history, political and literary, from which we seem justified in concluding—first, that the Arthur of the earliest historical sources, and of the earliest bardic poems, was a leader of the northern Cymry, and, hence, that the North was the cradle of Arthurian story; secondly, that, in the history of the northern Cymry, there were conditions inimical to the importation and preservation of Arthurian traditions, supposing they did *not* originate in the North in an historical Arthur; and thirdly, that, on the other hand, in the history of the southern Cymry, there were conditions in the highest degree favourable to the importation of Arthurian traditions, supposing they *had* in the North, their historical origin. It is but just to add that I shall found these conclusions principally on the results of the admirable Celtic researches of Mr. Skene.<sup>1</sup>

#### SECTION (I).

##### *Direct Indications of the North as the Historical Birthland of Arthurian Tradition.*

First, then, let me state those critical results which directly

<sup>1</sup> Chiefly as contained in his Introductions, or Prefaces, to *The Four Ancient Books of Wales*, *The Book of the Dean of Lismore*, and *The Chronicles of the Picts and Scots*.

indicate the North as the birthland of Arthurian tradition. This I shall do in the order of the questions that logically arise in an investigation of Cymric history. The first of these is as to the number and character of the earliest authentic sources of such history? Besides the old Roman and Saxon authorities, these sources are but three in number—first, the *Historia* and *Epistola* of Gildas which, from internal evidence, appears to have been composed in the year 560; secondly, the works which go under the name of Nennius, of which the first would appear to have been written in the seventh century, soon after the *Origines* of Isidore of Seville who died in 636, and the others in the succeeding centuries, down to 1072; thirdly, the *Ancient Laws and Institutes of Wales*, of which the oldest, the Laws of Howel dda, are of the tenth century.

We have next to inquire what, so far as we can gather it from these ancient historical sources, was the distribution of the Cymric population in the sixth century, the earliest of which we find native historians? And we thence discover that, instead of the Cymry being, as commonly supposed, confined to Wales and Cornwall, with the Picts and Scots occupying the country to the north of the wall between the Tyne and the Solway; the Cymry possess the whole of the country from the Dee and the Humber to the Firths of Forth and Clyde, except the east coast from the Tyne to the Esk, where the Saxons are gradually encroaching, and the district of Galloway on the north of the Solway, between the Nith and Loch Ryan, where the Picts still maintain themselves. But while we are thus shown the Cymric population extending much further north than we have hitherto generally believed, we find also that, instead of Wales being exclusively occupied by Cymry, its western seaboard is in the possession of the Gwyddyl, or Gael, (Scots from Ireland?) a line drawn from Conway, on the north, to Swansea on the south, separating the two (Celtic) races of the

Gwyddyl and the Cymry, on the west and on the east.<sup>2</sup> Further, as to the distribution of the Cymry in this early period, it seems here necessary only to add that the Bretons of Armorica were of this race;<sup>3</sup> as also should seem to have been the Belgæ of Holland, Belgium, Flanders, Picardy, and Normandy, by this time, however, for the most part absorbed by a Teutonic population.<sup>4</sup> Thus, as the first important result of our historical criticism, we find that the region in which, as has, in the foregoing chapter been shown, Arthurian localities are now to be found, is co-extensive with that occupied in the sixth century by the Cymric race.

On what part of this extensive territory did the events recorded by the earliest historians of the Cymry take place? The answer given by Mr. Skene, as the result of his examination of the above-mentioned sources, and particularly of the *Historia Britonum*, the earliest of the works collected under the name of Nennius, is—that these earliest recorded events occurred in the north of this Cymric territory, in those petty states or kingdoms of Strathclyde and Cumbria, which now form the south of Scotland and the English Border. And the Arthur of Nennius, the only historic Arthur, thus appears as the *dux bellorum* or *Guledig* of these northern Cymric states in a prolonged, but victorious conflict with the Saxons of the Bernician kingdom of the eastern coast, and the Picts from the other side of the Forth, in the sixth century. For the detailed proof of this very important conclusion, I shall here only refer to Mr. Skene's recent work; to those papers in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of 1842, above referred to (p. xvii\*. n. 21), which, maintaining a similar theory, first, I believe, suggested to Mr. Skene the course of research, of which we have the ripe fruit in the *Four Ancient Books*; and to the Appendix to this Essay.

<sup>2</sup> *Four Ancient Books* v. I. p. 43. See also JONES (Archdeacon), *Vestiges of the Gael in Gwynedd*.

<sup>3</sup> SOUVESTRE, *Les Derniers Bretons*, v. I. p. 144.

<sup>4</sup> NICHOLS' *Pedigree of the English*, p. 40.

The early distribution of the Cymric race, and the place of the earliest events recorded by its historians, being thus determined, the way is cleared for an answer to the next question that naturally arises in pursuing this investigation, namely,—to what district, and to what age, does the most ancient Cymric literature, the body of poems attributed to Bards of the sixth century, really belong, and how does Arthur appear in them? For it is evident that, if these poems are genuine, they must reflect the history of that period; and hence, that their accordance with the ascertained distribution, and facts of the history of the Cymric race in the sixth century, must be taken as the test of the age commonly assigned to them. And “if we find that they do not re-echo to any extent the fictitious narrative of the events of the fifth and sixth centuries as represented in the *Bruts*, but rather the leading facts of the early history of the Cymry, as we have been able to deduce them from the older authorities, it will be a strong reason for concluding that they belong themselves to an earlier age.”<sup>5</sup> Such are the grounds on which Mr. Skene proceeds in controverting the conclusions of that negative school of criticism represented by Mr. Stephens<sup>6</sup> and Mr. Nash,<sup>7</sup> and which was the natural reaction from the extravagances of the mythologic school of Owen Pughe, and Edward Williams, and, more particularly, of Davies,<sup>8</sup> and of Herbert.<sup>9</sup>

Mr. Skene thus states the result of his examination of these poems. First, as to the district of the ancient Cymric territory to which they belong: “Of a large proportion of the historical poems, the scenery and events lie in the north; the warriors whose deeds they celebrate were ‘*Gwyr y Gogledd*,’ or Men of the North; they are attributed to Bards (Merlin, Taliessin, Aneurin,

<sup>5</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 225.

<sup>6</sup> *Literature of the Kymry*.

<sup>7</sup> *Taliessin, or the Bards and Druids of Britain*.

<sup>8</sup> *The Mythology of the British Druids*.

<sup>9</sup> *Britannia after the Romans*, and *The Neo-Druidic Heresy*.

and Llywarch Hen,) connected with the north; and are, in point of fact, the literature of the Cymric inhabitants of Cumbria before that kingdom was subjugated by the Saxon king,"<sup>10</sup> Edmund of Wessex, and by him ceded to the Gaelic king, Malcolm, king of Scots, in 946. Secondly, as to the true age of these poems attributed to Bards of the sixth century, Mr. Skene, while considering that the oldest of them may have their foundation in the national lays of Bards, who lived amid the conflicts of contending races in that century, does not "place these poems in their earliest consistent shape further back than the seventh century;" when "the sudden rise of the Cymric population to power under Cadwallawn, and the burst of national enthusiasm and excited hope, found vent in poetry."<sup>11</sup> Lastly, how do these earliest Cymric poems mention Arthur, and where do they place him? "Out of so large a body of poems, there are only five which mention him at all, and then it is the historical Arthur, the Guledig, to whom the defence of the wall was entrusted, and who fights the twelve battles in the north, and finally perishes at Camlan."<sup>12</sup> And Mr. Skene very justly advances this fact in confirmation of the high antiquity which, controverting the conclusions of Mr. Stephens and Mr. Nash, he assigns to these poems. "If they occupied a place, as is supposed, in Welsh literature, subsequent to the introduction of the Arthurian Romances, we should expect these poems to be saturated with king Arthur, his knights, and their adventures. But it is not so."<sup>13</sup> The fact is, on the contrary, as above-stated. These results, therefore, of the critical examination of Cymric history, political and literary, lead directly to the positive conclusion that the historical Arthur having been a leader of the northern Cymry, the original birthland of the Arthurian traditions was the region which now forms Southern Scotland, and the English Border.

<sup>10</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 242.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 226-7.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* p. 243.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* p. 226.



## SECTION (II).

*Historical Conditions inimical to the Importation into the North of Arthurian Tradition.*

But, for the sake of further assurance, let us suppose that the Arthurian traditions of Scotland did not originate there in an historical Arthur; and so, inquire whether the History of the Northern Cymry presents us with conditions favourable, or inimical, to the importation of such traditions, and their topographical preservation, if thus derived, and not original. What the general conditions are that favour, or oppose, the introduction of traditions and traditional topographies from countries in which they have had an actual basis in historical facts, I will not here venture to state. The defining of such conditions belongs, indeed, fundamentally, to a science not yet constituted, a Psychology, not of men considered individually, but collectively. Here it will be sufficient briefly to point-out the chief historical facts connected with the northern Cymry; and then ask, whether, there are, or not, in these facts, such conditions as our present historical, and psychological knowledge would make appear inimical to the derivation from Wales, or elsewhere, of the Arthurian traditional topography of Southern Scotland.

Of these facts, the first to be noted is, that the petty Cymric kingdoms of the north were finally absorbed in the greater kingdom, not only of a kindred Celtic race, but of a race with which the Cymry had never been, except temporarily or occasionally, at war; and a race, moreover, which had, like the Cymry themselves, been the champions of Christianity against Paganism during the whole of these now dim, but once passion-lit Pre-mediæval Centuries. The region which, in the tenth century, began to be known as Scotland<sup>14</sup> was, in the sixth century, after the withdrawal of the

<sup>14</sup> First so called in that part of the *Saxon Chronicle* composed about 975. *Scotia* is used first with its modern meaning by Marianus Scotus in the eleventh century.

Romans, occupied by the four nations, or rather tribes, of the Cymry, the Scots, the Picts, and the Saxons; the three first, of Celtic, the last, of Teutonic race. With the Picts on the north, and the Saxons on the east, the Cymry were in constant warfare; and had either the Saxons or the Picts finally succeeded in consolidating these various tribes in a new nationality, there would be evident psychological grounds for the hypothesis that the Arthurian traditions of Scotland were not the legendary records of historical events which had there occurred, but of events which had elsewhere happened, and of which the traditions had been imported to console a conquered race under a foreign and hated yoke. But neither by the Picts, nor by the Angles, with whom they had been for centuries at war, were the Cymry of the north finally absorbed; but by the Scots, a brother of whose king they had themselves voluntarily elected to the throne in 918, previously to their being regularly incorporated into the Scottish nationality after the Treaty of 946, between Malcolm II. and their Saxon foe, Edmund of Wessex.

But in these Pre-mediæval Centuries, ecclesiastical is even more important than political history. The history of Christianity is then, indeed, what the history of Philosophy and of Science has become since the upbreak of the Catholico-feudal system of the Mediæval Age; that which alone, making transparent the spirit animating the outward forms of political changes, reveals to us their deepest causes. For not only had Churchmen, in these ancient centuries, a predominant influence in accomplishing, or retarding, political revolutions; but with a native Church was indissolubly connected the national language and literature. How, then, do the chief facts of the ecclesiastical history of the northern Cymric States bear on the question before us? Now we find that the Christianity of Scotland was derived from two different sources. Directly from Rome came the Missions to the Cymry and Angles

of the south; while those to the Scots and Picts of the north, emanated from the Irish Church of St. Patrick. This latter Church was distinctively monastic in its organization; and hence arose an opposition between the two Christian Churches of North Britain, which could not, in that Pre-mediæval Age, but have the most important political, and other effects. For us, it is sufficient here to note that it was the Irish, or Columban Church of the Scots that ultimately acquired the supremacy; a supremacy marked by the foundation, in the year 736, of the Church of S. Andrew; and the general adoption of S. Andrew, instead of—as when the Church of the Cymry (and Angles) had the ascendancy—S. Peter, as the patron saint of the kingdom.<sup>15</sup> And hence we see that, in the victory of the opponent Church with its Gaelic language and literature, the way was already, in the eighth century, prepared, not only for that political incorporation of the northern Cymric States in the kingdom of the Scots which took place in the tenth century, but for that complete absorption of the Cymric by the Gaelic race, indicated by such a speedy disappearance of the language of the former that, at the opening of the Mediæval Age, in the eleventh century, we find the various tribes of North Britain consolidated into a Gaelic-speaking kingdom.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Compare SKENE, *Chronicles of the Picts and Scots*, pp. clxx.-iv., INNES, *Sketches of Early Scottish History*, ch. i. etc., and BURTON, *History of Scotland*, v. I. chs. vii. and viii.

<sup>16</sup> "To account for the prevalence of a Teutonic speech throughout the southern and eastern lowlands of Northern Scotland, the existence of a Teutonic people in this quarter before the twelfth century is often vaguely assumed as a fact, without specifying either their origin, or the time of their settlement. . . . But if the main body of the population of Scotland proper then spoke the Teutonic dialect which has lasted till the present day, how is it to be explained that to speak *Scotice* in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries was to talk *Gaelic*? If two distinct dialects of an origin so different had existed beyond the Forth in the days of Huntingdon, how could he have written about the extinction of the Pictish people and their language, when the dialect which was not Scottish would have assuredly been regarded as Pictish? Above all, Bede, who has left on record a Pictish word, unquestionably of *Celtic* origin, was aware of no essential difference of race between the northern and southern Picts, or indeed of any people of Teutonic origin in Britain, besides the Angles, Jutes, and

Still other facts there are, however, which seem to make incredible any other derivation of Scottish Arthurian topography than from an historical leader of the northern Cymry. For the conquering Scots were no illiterate horde of barbarians. On the contrary, "Anglo-saxon literature had not begun to spread when that of the Scots was supreme. . . . And by the Scots writers, whether of Dalriada or Ireland, the Saxons are spoken of without any affectation as barbarians, just as they would have been spoken of by the Romans. From the other side even, in Bede's own patriotic narrative, the sense of inferiority is distinctly apparent. Indeed he traces one of the greatest contributions towards their civilization which the Saxons received, directly to Iona."<sup>17</sup> And, what still more directly bears on the present question, the Scots had a traditional and poetic literature of their own, which must certainly have greatly opposed the introduction, after their incorporation of the Cymry, of Cymric poetry and tradition, and must, also, have been a condition highly unfavourable to the preservation of such tradition,

Saxons. . . . . But did this Teutonic speaking colony arrive at a later period after the union of the Picts and Scots under the line of Kintyre? If so, it must have been of Scandinavian origin. But history, which has preserved the remembrance of the Scandinavian settlements on the northern mainland, and throughout the western islands, is totally silent about any such colonization in the southern and eastern lowlands of ancient Alban. Where history is silent, topography sometimes reveals the secrets of the past. . . . . But the map may be searched in vain for any such traces in the northern lowlands of a band of colonists so numerous and so important, as to retain this dialect, which they never stamped upon the face of the country, and to perpetuate it as one of the original sources of the Lowland Scotch spoken at the present day. The existence of such a population in such a quarter is as apocryphal as the mythical Scottish conquest. . . . The English was stamped a nationality upon the descendants of the various races subject to the Rex Scotorum, and as the use of (Gaelic, and) Norman-French died away, and the 'quaint Inglis' of Southern Scotland and the civic population became the language of the king and his nobility, spreading gradually over the whole of those lowland districts which had long formed the heart of ancient *Alban*, the Gaelic tongue, rather than the Gaelic race, was at length confined to the mountains, and the names of *Scot* and *Scotland* were adopted as national and generic terms from the language which had now become the national speech. Henceforward to speak *Scotice* was to talk in the Lowland tongue."—ROBERTSON, *Scotland under Her Early Kings*, Appendix I. *Picts and Scots*, pp. 374–5 and p. 369.

<sup>17</sup> BURTON, *History of Scotland*, v. I. p. 332.

had it had, either before or after such incorporation, any other than a native, historical origin. But, to the third Chapter, in which I shall have to treat of the relation of the Fingalian to the Arthurian topography of Scotland, I shall defer any further notice of the Ossianic poetry of the Scots.

Suppose, then, that Y Gogledd, The North, or what we now call southern Scotland, was *not* the historical birthland of the Arthurian traditions, how came they there? Are there not, in the above stated facts, conditions in the highest degree inimical to the introduction of these traditions from without? Topographically rooted, popular traditions are phenomena that must have no slight causes. What causes do we find in the history of the North that are sufficient to explain its Arthurian topography, otherwise than as originating in the life and the wars of a native and historical Arthur? Mr. Pearson, indeed, maintains that the historical Arthur was sovereign of a territory in the southwest of England, of which Camelot or Cadbury, in Somersetshire was the capital; and, admitting how numerous are the Arthurian localities of Scotland, asks, "now assuming Arthur's history to become first extensively popular in the twelfth century, who are most likely to take it up, and identify it with localities in their own neighbourhood? The Saxons or Saxonized settlers in Devon, or the Welsh and Picts of Galloway? Surely the latter. Which history can best be interpolated with strange facts? the history of the conquered and civilized western counties, or that of districts which long maintained their barbarous independence? Again, the latter."<sup>18</sup> But to this it appears sufficient to reply that the Cymry of the North were not only not in a state of "barbarous independence" in the twelfth century; but that, as above shown, they were unresistingly incorporated in the monarchy of the Scots in the tenth century; and that a Church and language opposed to their own had become supreme in Scotland in the eighth

<sup>18</sup> *Bishop Percy's Folio MS.*, v. 1. p. 403. See also Mr. Pearson's note, *infra*, p. cxlix\*.

century.<sup>19</sup> If, therefore, Arthurian traditions are admitted to be thus numerous in Scotland, how can we account for their origin there on any reasonable hypothesis of importation?

In the fact, then, of the Pre-mediæval absorption of the northern Cymry by a kindred race, with whom they had never been at war; in the fact of the loss of their native language succeeding the subjection of their native church; and in the fact of the conquering Scots having a traditional and poetic literature of their own; there were conditions that seem to make it impossible to explain the existence of Arthurian localities in Scotland on any other theory than that to which we have been led by the critical examination of the earliest historical sources, and earliest bardic poems of the Cymry; namely, that these localities were, in the North, not the creations of a fond fancy acting on a transplanted tradition, but the genuine records of a native, historical hero.

#### SECTION (III).

##### *Historical Conditions favourable to the Importation into the South of Arthurian Tradition.*

Very different was the history of the Cymric kingdoms of what afterwards became the West of England, and the North-west of France. These, after a resistance, enduring with various fortune, for many centuries, were ultimately overpowered by a foreign, and chiefly Teutonic, race; against whom it was, and is, their pride to maintain their native language; and to preserve, or invent, glorifying traditions. Not here, as in the North, were the Cymry absorbed by a kindred race.

Further, not only were there migrations from Strathclyde and Cumbria, which would carry the Arthurian traditions, suppose them to have had their historical origin in the North, into new southern homes, but it was from the northern region of Manau, or Manann

<sup>19</sup> See also in answer to Mr. Pearson's objections to the theory maintained by Mr. Skene and myself, *infra*, p. cxlvii\*.

that "Cunedda went with his sons, and gave a royal house to the Throne of Wales, in the person of Maelgwn and his descendants. And when this house failed in the person of Cynan Tyndathwy, there is every reason to believe that the same region gave a second royal house to Wales, in the person of Mervyn Frych;"<sup>20</sup> and so, also, it should seem that one dynasty, at least, of the kings of Cornwall was descended from a northern family. And that there were large and frequent migrations from Cornwall to Brittany is well known.

And consider these critical results. "If the poems attributed to the bards of the sixth century really belong to that period," —(we have seen that, in Mr. Skene's opinion, they cannot be carried further back in their earliest consistent shape, than the seventh century)—"there is an interval of several centuries during which such a literature either never existed, or has perished, till the twelfth century, from which period a mass of poetic literature existed in Wales, and has been preserved to us. Of the genuine character of that poetry there seems to be no doubt."<sup>21</sup> As to the Cymric literature of Brittany, the *Poemes des Bards Bretons au Sixième Siècle*, of M. de la Villemarqué, can only for a moment mislead by its title. It is, in fact, but a French edition of those ancient Cymric poems which, as we have seen, belong, in Mr. Skene's opinion, to the northern kingdoms of Cumbria and Strathclyde, absorbed by the Scottish nationality. And considering how much the brilliant volumes of M. de la Villemarqué have done in elucidating and popularizing the whole cycle of Arthurian romance, it is with regret that one finds grave suspicion cast on his perfect honesty as a collector of Breton ballads; and objections, hitherto, I believe, unanswered raised against the genuineness of what have been given to the world as ancient Cymric poems of Brittany. But this being so, we are left with the Four Ancient Books of Wales, or rather, if Mr. Skene's criticism of them is accepted, of *Arthurian Scotland*, as presenting to

<sup>20</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. pp. 93-4.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.* p. 19.

us the only genuine fragments of Cymric literature of the Pre-mediæval Age.

Remark also the fact that it was with the loss of national independence that all the genuine Cymric literature, later than these Four Books, arose. With the defeat and death of Rhys ap Tewdwr, fighting against the Normans under Robert Fitzhamon, the kingdom of South Wales came to an end in 1090. And though native princes still ruled in North Wales till 1282, the death in that year of Llywelyn was followed by the subjugation of all Wales by King Edward the First. It was contemporaneously with these events that Welsh literature arose, and that the MSS. were written which we now possess of the ancient poems of the northern Cymry, by this time completely absorbed in the new nationality to which the conquering Celtic race of the Scots had given their name. In a literature composed under such circumstances, it is evident that the localization of Arthur in Wales<sup>22</sup> can be of no independent force; nor can it, indeed, be regarded as anything more than such a localizing and magnifying of northern Cymric traditions, as was calculated to soothe a conquered race in their dejection, and to flatter them with new hope.

And, finally, observe that, throughout the whole of this southern region, the ground was most eminently prepared for the reception of Arthurian traditions. For, in the first place, there must, by the eleventh or twelfth centuries, have been many traditions of conquest, as of defeat, during the half-millennium of wars with the Saxons. There may, also, during these five hundred years, very probably have been southern leaders of the same name as the great northern Guledig of the sixth century; or leaders, such as Dr. Guest's Owen Finddu (?) (above p. xxvii\*. n. 21) whose story

<sup>22</sup> Nor even, when Arthur is placed by this later literature in Wales, does this necessarily mean the present Principality; for by writers of this age—Froissart for instance—the mountains of *Cumberland* were still called *Wales*.



could readily get confounded with that of Arthur. And, further, though the traditions of Arthur, Guenivere, and Lancelot, of Merlin the Bard, of Perceval, Gawayne, and Mordred, would appear to have had their historical origin among the Northern Cymry of what is now Southern Scotland; yet these, though the main, are not the only traditions on which the Arthurian Romance-cycle is founded; and Wales, Cornwall, and Brittany very possibly had the way prepared for the introduction from the North of the main Arthurian tradition, by the existence in each of them already of traditions with which the northern story might be readily connected. As to what, however, really were the native Arthurian traditions of Wales, Cornwall, and Brittany respectively, I will not here venture to say more than that the tradition of Mark should seem to be the special contribution of Cornwall to the cycle of Arthurian romance. How similar the story of Mark is to the *domestic* tradition of Arthur need hardly be noted; except more clearly to show how readily explicable, on the theory here maintained, is the association in Cornish localities of the traditions of Mark and of Arthur.

Considering these facts—the conquest by a foreign race, but preservation of the language, of the Cymric kingdoms of the South; the Cymric migrations from, but not to, the North, and the northern descents of some of the southern dynasties; the Mediæval, and not Pre-mediæval, age of the whole of Cymric literature, except those earlier poems in which Arthur is but some half-dozen times mentioned, and then, as it should seem, as a leader of the Northern Cymry; the upburst of this Mediæval Cymric literature coterminously with the last struggles for, and final loss of, national independence; and the general preparation of the southern kingdoms for the transplanting of Arthurian localities;—can we refuse to see conditions in the highest degree favourable to the importation from the North of the Arthurian traditions of the West of England and the North-west of France?

Such, then, are the theoretical considerations, arising from the latest results of the criticism of Cymric history and literature ; considerations that lead us both directly, and indirectly, to the conclusion that Southern Scotland and the English Border was the historical birthland of the main Arthurian traditions. For, not only does the direct criticism of the earliest historical records, and earliest bardic poems, lead to the conclusion that Arthur was an actual sixth-century leader of the northern Cymry ; but the further investigation of Cymric history presents to us conditions highly unfavourable in the North, and highly favourable in the South, to an hypothesis of the outward derivation of the Arthurian traditions of which, both in the North and in the South, we find topographical records. But, as I have above admitted, the materials for forming an assured critical conclusion on such a question as the present are too scanty, to make our theory independent of verification from some other line of research. How is this to be attempted ? By a thorough investigation of the Arthurian topography of the North. For if we should find that Arthurian localities are here more numerous than in any of the other regions of the Old Arthurland ; that these localities are not spread over Scotland, but are confined to the region which in the sixth, but not after the tenth century, was mainly peopled by a Welsh-speaking race ; that they are thickest just where the battles between the Cymry and their Saxon and Pictish foes must have been most frequent ; that the exceptions to the rule of Arthurian localities being found only where there was anciently a Cymric population, do but make the accordance between tradition and historical fact all the more striking ; and that, finally, with localities in the North, not Arthur only, but all the chief characters of Arthurian Romance, are connected ; I think it will have to be conceded that we have a very complete inductive verification of our theoretical conclusions from the criticism of Cymric History.

## CHAPTER III.

THE CHIEF COUNTRY OF ARTHURIAN LOCALITIES, AS GENERALIZED  
FROM AN EXPLORATION OF SOUTHERN SCOTLAND AND THE  
ENGLISH BORDER.

LET me now proceed to give the generalized result of my exploration of the existing Arthurian Topography of the region indicated by the criticism of Cymric history as the birthland of Arthurian tradition, in a narrative of a single hypothetical journey in which a very great number of actual journeys through particular districts are connected, as in the route on the accompanying map. Let us suppose ourselves, then, to start from the Braes of Mar, at the foot of Ben-Muich-Dhui,<sup>1</sup> the central dome of that mountain range of the Grampians, which, as we shall find in the next chapter, separates Arthurian, from Fingalian Scotland. For, journeying, and it must be on foot, up Glen Cluny, and Glen Callater;—ascending the wild, and solitary heights at the head of Loch Callater to the plateau of the Kinlochan Forest;—passing along the eastern edge of the deep glen which runs up through this plateau, with hawks and eagles over head, and great herds of red deer in the woody pastures of the glen below;—and travelling through Upper and Lower Glen Isla; we shall, in a single day's journey,—but of some thirty or forty miles,—pass through scenery which will remain in our recollection as a grand background to that of Arthurian Scotland; and, coming down on the most north-eastern group of Arthurian localities, our route will be southwards, through the eastern part of the Arthurian region, and then up again, northwards, on its western side.

We shall thus explore successively three great divisions of Arthu-

<sup>1</sup> For a more detailed account of this grand central district of Scotland than is found in the ordinary Guide-Books, see BURTON'S *Cairngorm Mountains*, and TAYLOR'S *Braemar Highlands*; the former, for mountain climbing; and the latter, for traditional tales.

rian localities—an Eastern, a Southern, or Border, and a Western Division; and the very numerous localities of each of these divisions we shall find to lie in three naturally distinguished districts, giving us, thus, in “the North,” no less than nine distinct Districts of Arthurian Localities. And, further, we shall find these localities to be of three different classes, which may be distinguished as Traditional, Historical, and Poetical; the first, being localities which, in their names and the still living traditions attached to them, are Arthurian; the second, being identifications of places connected with the Arthurian story as it is found in the earliest historical sources; and the third, being identifications of places mentioned in those Four Ancient Books of Cymric Poetry which we have found to belong, in their subject-matter, to the Arthurian Age, meaning by that term, not merely the generation of Arthur, but the century which opens with his exploits. That, side by side with these identifications of historical and poetical sites, we should find a very great number of traditional localities, is evidently, in itself, and apart from other considerations, no slight proof of the correctness of these identifications.

#### SECTION (1).

##### *The Eastern Division of Arthurian Scotland.*

Lower Glen Isla lies between the main line of the Grampians and the lower range of hills, through the eastern end of which the road passes. Here we find ourselves with a wooded hill on the right, and, on the left, a steep, furze-covered hill, the last of the range in this direction, and with the remains of what has apparently been a formidable stronghold on its summit. It is Barry-hill (*Barra*, fortified hill), and the first Arthurian locality of what I would distinguish as *District I.—Strathmore*. I ascend its grassy sides, crossed by many a sheep-track, and am sorry its rabbit-inhabitants disturb themselves so much to get out of my way. Seated on the higher of

the two lines of entrenchment, and looking down on the great valley of Strathmore, stretching across to the seaward range of the Sidlaw Hills, and with the Isla winding through it, past the "bonnie house o' Airlie," I recall its Arthurian traditions. For innumerable legends agree in representing it as the Castle to which the Pictish king Mordred, having defeated King Arthur in a great battle, carried off as a prisoner his queen Quenivere, or, as she is locally named, Ganora, Vanora, or Wander.<sup>2</sup> This, however, it seems, she found by no means so unpleasant as she ought to have done. For "Vanora," says tradition, "held an unlawful intercourse with Mordred; and Arthur, when he received her again," did not act with the magnanimity of Mr. Tennyson's *flos regum*, but, "enraged at her infidelity, caused her to be torn to pieces by wild horses."<sup>3</sup> As an old fellow, however, with whom I got into talk on the road near this, and who told me a legend I had not previously heard of the four places in this neighbourhood where the parts of Queen Vanora's dismembered body were buried, sagely remarked: "Thae auld histories are maistly lees, I'm thinkin'."

Her tomb (or principal tomb), "Ganore's Grave," lies but a few miles off. For "she was buried at Meigle, and a monument erected to perpetuate her infamy." Gray, who visited the place from Glamis Castle, notes: "Passed through Meigill, where is the tomb of Queen Wander, that was riven to death by stoned horses for nae gude that she did,—so the woman here told me, I assure you."<sup>4</sup> And on examining the curious sculptured stones in Meigle churchyard,<sup>5</sup> said to be the remains of this monument, we do actually find "two representations of wild beasts tearing a human body,—and one where the body seems tied, or close to chariot

<sup>2</sup> Called Wanore and Vanore in the Scottish Romance of *Lancelot of the Lake* of 1478 or 1490. See pp. 230 and 575. Edit. E.E.T. Soc.

<sup>3</sup> *New Statistical Account of Scotland*, v. X. 118.

<sup>4</sup> *Works* (1825) v. II. p. 274.

<sup>5</sup> See STUART'S *Sculptured Stones of Scotland*.

wheels,—which may relate to Vanora, or may have given rise to the tradition.”<sup>6</sup> This is otherwise described by Archdeacon Sinclair, of Glasgow, in a MS. of the year 1560, as, “Ane goddess in ane caert and twa hors drawand her.”<sup>7</sup> But the scene of her last resting place, when I visited it, seemed suggestive of some less rude, some nobler version of her story. It was the close of autumn. Along the broad valley of Strathmore, ending northwards in the Howe of the Mearns, and sheltered from the sea by the Sidlaw Hills, with their many legends of Duncan, Macbeth,<sup>8</sup> and Banquo, the farm-yards were closely stacked with the ingathered corn; the leaves, whirled by gentle breezes, were falling through the sunny air; and beneath the lofty range of the snow-capped Grampians, lay the dying year in the beauty of an ineffable repose.

Mordred thus appears, in Scottish tradition, as both the political *hostis*, or foe, and the domestic *inimicus*, or unfriend, of Arthur; but in Mediæval Romance he commonly occupies the former position only, while his traditional part, as the lover of Guenivere, is taken by Lancelot. The question then arises, can Lancelot, as well as Mordred, be localized in Scotland? Now M. de la Villemarqué very ingeniously identifies Lancelot, or L'Ancelet, with the Cymric chieftain Mael: “Les plus anciens manuscrits . . . portent souvent Ancelet . . . *Ance*l, en langue romane, signifie *servant*, et Ancelet est son diminutif . . . Si, par hasard, Ancelet était la traduction du nom d'un personnage gallois, dont l'histoire s'accorderait en tout point avec le roman? Eh bien, c'est ce que je crois avoir découvert on trouve, en effet dans les traditions celtiques, un chef dont le nom

<sup>6</sup> *New Stat. Ac.* v. X. p. 234.

<sup>7</sup> Quoted by CHALMERS (of Auldbar) *Sculptured Stones of Angus and Mearns*.

<sup>8</sup> It would hardly be fair to Shakspeare's hero to omit noting that, in the general rehabilitation of traditional villains, which modern historians have done so much to accomplish, Macbeth has been found one of the greatest of Scotland's kings.—ROBERTSON, *Scotland under Her Early Kings*, v. I. p. 121-4. BURTON, *History of Scotland*, v. I. p. 370-7.

*Mael (serviteur)* répond exactement à celui d'*Ancelot*, et à qui les anciens bardes, les triades, les chroniques, les legends, et toutes les autorités armoricaines, galloises ou étrangères prêtent les mêmes traits, le même caractère, les mêmes mœurs, les mêmes aventures qu'au héros du roman français."<sup>9</sup> And, if we accept this identification, then Lancelot, as well as Mordred, belongs to Scotland. For "le chef Mael, selon les bardes gallois, avait dans l'Ecosse des domaines où il la mena."<sup>10</sup> But we may far more directly identify the country of Lancelot with a Scottish district, for he is uniformly spoken of in the Romances as the son of "le roy Ban de Benoic;" and in the Scottish *Lancelot* of 1478, this "Benoic" is at once identified for us in the lines—

"a knyght clepit Lancelot of ye Laik,  
That sone of Bane was king of Albanak"—<sup>11</sup>

Albanak, or Alban, being the well-known name applied to Scotland beyond the Firths of Forth and Clyde.<sup>12</sup> And that it was in the eastern part of that region that the kingdom of Lancelot's father was situated, we may presume from the fact of its having been "le roy Claudas de la terre d'Escosse" (the western kingdom of the Scots of Dalriada?) who "mena guerre contre le roy Ban de Benoic et le roy Boort de Ganues (or Gannes) tant quil les desherita de leurs terres."<sup>13</sup> Thus, the Mael of tradition, and the Lancelot of romance, and the Mordred both of tradition and romance, are as closely connected in the scenes, as in the stories of their lives.

In very remarkable proximity to the Castle of Mordred, and the Grave of Guenivere, we find near Meigle, and in the parish of Cupar Angus, a standing stone called the Stone of Arthur; near it, again,

<sup>9</sup> *Les Romans de la Table Ronde*, pp. 58-9.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. p. 64, citing *The Myrryrian Archæology*, v. I. p. 175.

<sup>11</sup> Lines 201-2, p. 7, of the Edition of the E. E. Text Soc.

<sup>12</sup> *Book of the Dean of Lismore*, p. lxxv.

<sup>13</sup> *Lancelot du Lac*, f. 1.

a gentleman's seat, called Arthur's Stone; and not far from it a farm called Arthur's Fold.<sup>14</sup> And "a rock on the north side of the hill of Dunbarrow, in Dunnichen parish (in the adjoining county of Forfar), has long borne, in the tradition of the country, the distinguished name of Arthur's Seat."<sup>15</sup> This parish, it may be noted, is further remarkable as the scene of that great defeat of the Saxon Ecfrit, in 680, which permanently secured the country between the Tay and the Forth from the influences that would have made it part of England.<sup>16</sup>

And the Tay,—of which the old name was Tava, from the Gaelic *Tamh*, smooth, of which *Taw* is the Cymric equivalent,—is more than once mentioned in the *Four Ancient Books*, as, for instance, in the *Black Book of Caermarthen*:

"It is not the nearest Tawy I speak of to thee,  
But the furthest Tawy."<sup>17</sup>

And the Scottish Tay, and not the river of that name in South Wales, seems to be also alluded to in the Dialogue between Merlin and his sister Ganiada in the *Red Book of Hergest*:

"Ryderch Hael, the feller of the foe,  
Dealt his stabs among them,  
On the day of bliss at the ford of Tawy."<sup>18</sup>

Between Perth on the Tay, and Stirling on the Forth, we find no Arthurian localities. But at the latter river, we enter on *District II.—Firth of Forth*. The banks of the Forth should seem to have been the scene of a dispute as to who should lead in crossing the river, of which a curious legend is preserved in the Venedotian code of the *Old Welsh Laws* (p. 50).<sup>19</sup> And on

<sup>14</sup> *New Stat. Ac.*, v. I. p. 506. PENNANT, *Second Tour in Scotland*, v. II. pp. 177-8. BELLENDEN'S *BOECE*, fo. lxxviii.

<sup>15</sup> *New Stat. Ac.*, v. I. p. 419.

<sup>16</sup> BURTON, *History of Scotland*, v. I. p. 313.

<sup>17</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 294.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* p. 463.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.* v. I. pp. 174-5.



the Links of Forth, Mr. Skene would find the site of Arthur's tenth battle, "in litore fluminis quod vocatur Treuruit." "There is much variety in the readings of this name, other MSS. reading it 'Trath truiroit;' but the original Cymric form is given us in two of the poems in the *Black Book*; it is in one *Try-wruid*, and in the other *Tratheu Trywruid*. There is no known river bearing a name approaching to this. *Tratheu*, or shores, implies a sea-shore or sandy beach, and can only be applicable to a river having an estuary. An old description of Scotland, written in 1165 by one familiar with Welsh names, says that the river which divides the 'regna Anglorum et Scottorum et currit juxta oppidum de Strivelin' was 'Scottice vocata *Froch*, Britannice *Werid*.'<sup>20</sup> This Welsh name for the Forth at Stirling has disappeared, but it closely resembles the last part of Nennius' name, and the difference between *wruid*, the last part of Nennius' name *Try-wruid*, and *Werid* is trifling. The original form must have been *Gwruid* or *Gwerid*, the *G* disappearing in combination."<sup>21</sup> So far Mr. Skene. And it must be, at least, remarked that not only has no more probable site been found for this tenth battle, but that we have a strong confirmation of the above argument in favour of the Links of Forth, in the fact of Stirling being undoubtedly a traditional Arthurian locality.

For William of Worcester tells us that "Rex Arturus custodiebat le round table in Castro de Styrl yng, aliter Snowden West Castell."<sup>22</sup> And Snowdon, which is also the official title of one of the Scottish heralds, has no connection with the Welsh mountain of

<sup>20</sup> *Chronicle of the Picts and Scots*, p. 136. "It may seem strange," says Mr. Skene, "that I should assert that *Gwryd* and *Forth* are the same word. But *Gwr* in Welsh is represented by *Fear* in Irish, the old form of which was *For*, and final *d* in Welsh is in Irish *ch*, in Pictish *th*. The river which falls into the Dee, near Bala, in North Wales, is called *Try-weryn*, a very similar combination."

<sup>21</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. II. pp. 56-7.

<sup>22</sup> *Itinerary*, p. 311.

that name, but is simply the descriptive name of Stirling—Snua-dun, the fort, or fortified hill, on the river.<sup>23</sup>

“Stirling’s tower  
Of yore the name of Snowdoun claims,”

says Sir Walter Scott,<sup>24</sup> and, in a note, quotes Sir David Lindsay :

“Adew, fair Snawdoun, with thy towris hie,  
Thy Chapell-royall, park, and *Tabyll Round* :  
May, June, and July would I dwell in thee,  
Were I a man, to hear the birdis sound,  
Whilk doth agane thy royal rock rebound.”<sup>25</sup>

The Table Rounde here mentioned, and which I found to be now more generally known as the King’s Knot, is a singular flat-surfaced mound within a series of enclosing embankments, which would appear to be of very great antiquity ; and where, “in a sport called ‘Knights of the Round Table,’ the Institutions of King Arthur were commemorated,”<sup>26</sup> at least, to the close of the Mediæval Age. How current, in Scotland, were Arthurian tales in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is witnessed to by the poet I have just quoted, who, in his *Dreme*, speaks of having diverted James V. when young, “with antique storeis, and deidis martiall,”

“Of Hector, *Arthur*, and gentile Julius,  
Of Alexander, and worthy Pompeius.”

But, indeed, such evidence is unnecessary, considering that we still possess Scottish Arthurian Romances of that period.<sup>27</sup>

Near Larbert, and not far from where are now the Carron Iron-works, is, or rather was,—for it was destroyed many years ago by its barbarian proprietor,—what would appear to have been a Roman structure, but which, since the thirteenth century, at least, had been known as Arthur’s O’on (Oven). For in 1293, in the reign of

<sup>23</sup> CHALMERS, *Caledonia*, v. I. p. 245.

<sup>24</sup> *Lady of the Lake*, Canto VI. S. xxviii.      <sup>25</sup> *Complaynt of the Papingo*.

<sup>26</sup> *New Stat. Ac.*, v. VIII. p. 407, citing WILLIAM OF WORCESTER, BARBOUR, GOUGH’S, CAMDEN’S *Britannia*, and CHALMERS, *Caledonia*, v. I. p. 244-5.

<sup>27</sup> See IRVING, *History of Scottish Poetry*, Chs. II. and III. But his account of these Scottish Romances is incomplete.

Alexander III., William Gourley granted to the monks of Newbottle "firmationem unius stagni ad opus molendini sui del Stanhus quod juxta *Furnum Arthuri*, infra Baronium de Dunypas est." <sup>28</sup>

Proceeding up the Carron, which even Mr. Pearson identifies with the Carun Fluvius of Nennius,<sup>29</sup> we are struck with the appearance of two very singular conical hills, or mounds, in the park of Dunipace House. These Mr. Skene would make the site of Arthur's sixth battle "super flumen quod vocatur Bassas."<sup>30</sup> There is now no river of this name in Scotland; but, as Mr. Skene remarks, "the name Bass is also applied to a peculiar mound having the appearance of being artificial, which is formed near a river, though really formed by natural causes. There is one on the Ury river in Aberdeenshire, termed the Bass of Inverury, and there are two on the bank of the Carron, now called Dunipace, erroneously supposed to be formed from the Gaelic and Latin words *Duni pacis*, or hills of peace, but the old form of which was *Dunipais*, the latter syllable being no doubt the same word Bass. Directly opposite, the river Bonny flows into the Carron, and on this river I am disposed to place the sixth battle."<sup>31</sup>

But I venture to think that a personal inspection of the ground would not only have convinced Mr. Skene that the Park of Dunipace was a very unlikely place for a great battle, but have shown him, on the opposite side of the Carron, almost directly opposite these mounds, and in the angle formed by the junction of the Bonny with the Carron, another, and vastly larger Bass; a moraine (?) with three of its sides (those towards the Bonny and Carron) as steep and sharply defined at the edges as walls, and forming a natural stronghold, the broad flat summit of which, waving—

<sup>28</sup> *Charta Newbottle*, No. 239, cited by CHALMERS, *Caledonia*, v. I. p. 245.

<sup>29</sup> *Historical Maps—Britannia Cambria*.

<sup>30</sup> "The printed text of the Vatican MS. of Nennius has *Lussas*, but this is a mistake, the original MS. reads *Bassas*."—SKENE'S note.

<sup>31</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. pp. 53-4.

when I scaled it from the river side—in acres of clover, would scarce need defence except in the rear, where it slopes gradually to the south. This natural fortress must certainly have been the scene of many a conflict between Cymry, Picts and Saxons in the Arthurian Age; and all Mr. Skene's arguments would, as it appears to me, apply with ten-fold more force to this Bass than to those he has fixed on, as the site of the sixth battle of the Arthur of Nennius. From an old man, with whom I had some talk on the Bridge of Carron, I found that, in spaets, the river not unfrequently overflowed to the very base of this hill, and that it, and the farm to which it belongs, is called Roughmute. And many a rough moot, or council, has no doubt been held there.

After the old man left me, I suddenly remembered, as I looked over the bridge, and up the river, that the Carron was one of Ossian's favourite streams.

"I behold not the form of my son at Carun; nor the figure of Oscar in Crona. The rustling winds have carried him far away, and the heart of his father is sad." <sup>32</sup>

And so, instead of proceeding on my way, I wandered up its southern banks for a mile or two, coming down to the bridge again on the other side. Moraines, or whatever else they may be geologically, there is, on this southern bank, such a number of "Basses,"—of beautiful knolls, with woody dells, and shadowy braes,—such Fairy Highlands, as I do not remember to have elsewhere seen. Well might the Doric Muse have been here inspired with these fine pastoral lines:—

"O bonnie are the greensward howes,  
Whar through the birks the burnie rowes,  
An' the bee bums, an' the ox lowes,  
An' saft winds rustle,  
An' shepherd lads, on sunny knowes,  
Blaw the blithe whustle."

Then, on again towards the scene of the final battle between Arthur and Mordred; having some talk on the way with a bridge-

<sup>32</sup> MACPHERSON, *The Poems of Ossian. The War of Caros.*

keeper whom I found beguiling the time with Brougham's "Discourse on the Study of Science." "However ignorant we may be," he modestly remarked, "we may benefit a little." Now, where is the site of the "Gweith Camlan in qua Arthur et Medraut coruere," to be more probably found than at the little town of Camelon where we now are? "It is surprising," says Mr. Skene, "that historians should have endeavoured to place this battle in the south, as the same traditions, which encircle it with so many fables, indicate very clearly who his antagonists were. Medraut or Modred was the son of that Llew to whom Arthur is said to have given Lothian, and who, as Lothus, king of the Picts, is invariably connected with this part of Scotland. His forces were Saxons, Picts, and Scots, the very races Arthur is said to have conquered in his Scottish campaigns. If it is to be viewed as a real battle at all, it assumes the appearance of an insurrection of the conquered districts, under Medraut, the son of that Llew to whom one of them was given."<sup>33</sup> Remark, further, not only that the site bears still the very same name as the battle; but that it is, as we have already in part seen, in the centre of a group of Arthurian localities; and further that, as history has shown, it is well fitted to be a great battle-field. For, in later historical times, two great battles have been fought at, or near Camelon; that of Falkirk, but a mile distant, in 1298, between the Scots and the English; and that of Falkirk-muir, in 1746, between the Hanoverian forces, under General Hawley, and the Highlanders, commanded by Prince Charles Stuart.

But twenty-one years before this final Arthurian battle of the year 537, namely, in 516, was fought that twelfth battle "in Monte Badonis," of Nennius, the "obsessio Montis Badonici," of Gildas, the site of which has given rise to so much discussion. "It has been supposed to have been near Bath, but the resemblance of names seems alone to have led to this tradition. Tradition equally

<sup>33</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I., pp. 59-60.

points to the northern Saxons as the opponents, and in Ossa Cyllelaur,<sup>34</sup> who is always named as Arthur's antagonist, there is no doubt that a leader of Octa and Ebissa's Saxons is intended; while at this date no conflict between the Britons and the West Saxons could have taken place so far west as Bath. The scene of the battle near Bath was said to be on the Avon, which Layamon<sup>35</sup> mentions as flowing past Badon Hill. But on the Avon, not far from Linlithgow, is a very remarkable hill, of considerable size, the top of which is strongly fortified with double ramparts, and past which the Avon flows. This hill is called Bouden Hill. Sibbald says, in his *Account of Linlithgowshire*, in 1710, 'On the Buden Hill are to be seen the vestiges of an outer and inner camp. There is a great cairn of stones upon Lochcote Hills, over against Buden, and in the adjacent ground there have been found chests of stones, with bones in them, but it is uncertain when or with whom the fight was.' As this battle was the last of twelve which seem to have formed one series of campaigns, I venture," says Mr. Skene, "to identify Bouden Hill with the Mons Badonicus."<sup>36</sup>

After enjoying the beautiful view from the top, with the Little Bouden and Cockleroy Hills on my right, as I looked north over the undulating country about Linlithgow, with its ancient royal palace on the lake, across to the fine estuary of the Forth, the shores of Fife and Clackmannan, and the Ochil Hills (Sliabnochel, or Ocelli Montes); I found, in talk with an old man of upwards of fourscore ("81 on the 21st of last July"), who was breaking stones on the roadside, what appeared to me an interesting confirmation of Mr. Skene's hypothesis, in a tradition of Arthur's presence here, at least,

<sup>34</sup> May there not be a reminiscence of this name in the Gallehault of the French, and the Galyot of the Scottish, Romance of *Lancelot*?

<sup>35</sup> "There sank to the bottom five and twenty hundred, so that all Avon's stream was bridged with steel."—*Brut.* Edit. MADDEN, v. II. p. 469.

<sup>36</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. pp. 67-8.

if not also, of an Arthurian siege of Bouden Hill. After pointing out to me the "Fechtin' Fuirid," about three-quarters of a mile below Bouden Hill, "from which they say that the Romans lifted their camp to gang to besiege Jerooslem;"<sup>37</sup> and telling me that on Cockleroy there was "a bit hollow on the tap, whaur twa or three men nicht lie, ca'd the Bed o' Wallace;" I asked him how the hill got so curious a name? "Ou," said he, chuckling, and taking a pinch from his snuff-mull, "They say it was because the king was cockled (cuckolded) there." "What king?" said I, "any of the Stuarts?" "Na, I never heard it was ony o' the Stuarts at the pailace doon by; but it's mentioned in history<sup>38</sup> that King Arthur's wife was na' faithfu', an maybe it was her that was ouer cosh (too intimate) wi' anither man on the tap there."

Then, on to Linlithgow, which appears in Mr. Pearson's *Index*<sup>39</sup> as the Llechlleuteu of Aneurin, and thence down, some three miles, to the shore of the Firth and Caredin.

"Let the Caer of Eiddyn deplore  
The dread and illustrious men clothed in splendid blue."<sup>40</sup>

For this, as it would appear, was the site of the conflict which is the subject of the first part of that great poem of the "Gododin" which

<sup>37</sup> Would it be too much to consider this legend of a camp under Bouden as a memory of the Arthurian Obsessio Montis Badonici which had got attributed to the Romans; and this particularly, as there are many legends of Arthur's having gone to Jerusalem; as there is no considerable historical improbability in his actually having done so; and as, if he made an Eastern pilgrimage, it would probably have been after this twelfth victory, which gave the kingdom peace till the fatal battle of Camlan, in which Arthur fell, twenty-one years later. Very probably, had I asked the old man whether he did not mean that it was Arthur, and not the Romans, who "lifted" the camp, he would have assented. But one cannot get truth if one does not guard against the temptation to put such leading questions in support of one's theories.

<sup>38</sup> I found that such phrases as "auld histories," and "mentioned in history," did not mean, with these old men, written, but traditional history.

<sup>39</sup> *Historical Maps—Britannia Cambria.*

<sup>40</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 413 and v. II. p. 394. See also v. I. p. 378 and v. II. p. 374.

"has attracted so much attention, from its striking character, its apparent historic value, and the general impression that, of all the poems, it has the greatest claims to be considered the genuine work of the (Arthurian) bard (Aneurin) in whose name it appears."<sup>41</sup> After criticising the various theories, as to the site of this conflict, which have been put forward by Mr. Williams, M. de la Ville-marqué, Mr. Stephens, Mr. Nash, and Mr. Vere Irving, Mr. Skene thus proceeds :—

"It is plain from the poem that two districts, called respectively Gododin and Catraeth, met at or near a great rampart; that both were washed by the sea; and that in connection with the latter was a fort called 'Eyddin'. . . . . The name of Eyddin takes us at once to Lothian, where we have Dunedin or Edinburgh, and Caredin on the shore, called by Gildas 'antiquissima civitas Britonum.' That the Edin in (the former of?) these two names is the Eyddin of the poem is clear from a poem in the *Black Book of Caermarthen*, where Edinburgh is called Mynydd Eiddin; and in a poem in the *Book of Taliessin* there is the expression "Rhuing Dineiddyn ac Dineiddwg," where Dineiddyn can hardly be anything but Dunedin. At Caredin the Roman wall terminated. . . . And Caredin is not far from the river Avon, and parallel to it flows the river Carron, the two rivers enclosing a district at the west end of which is a great moor still called Slamannan; in old Gaelic "Sliabh Manand," the moor or plain of Manand. This is the "Campus Manand" of Tighernac, and the Avon and Carron are meant by the Hæfe and Caere of the *Saxon Chronicle*, and the Heue and Cere of *Henry of Huntingdon*. Now Gododin contained this district. For the *Guotodin* of the "*Manau Guotodin*," mentioned by Nennius as "regio in sinistrali parte insulæ" (an expression equivalent in Welsh to 'y gogledd,' or the North), is plainly the same as the Gododin of Aneurin; and the Cymric *Manau* of Gododin is, in its Gaelic form, *Manand*. Gododin was,

<sup>41</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. II. p. 359.



therefore, equivalent to the north part of Lothian, and was washed by the Firth of Forth.<sup>43</sup> So much for the identification of Eyddin and Gododin. Now as to Catraeth. "The *Irish Annals* frequently mention a district called *Calathros*; as in *Tighernac* . . . . in 736, 'Bellum Cnuice Cairpre i Calathros uc etar linn du,' which latter place can be identified as Carriber on the Avon, near Linlithgow. Calathros, therefore, adjoined this district. Its Latin form was Calatria . . . . Now, in the address of Walter L'Espece at the battle of the Standard in 1130, as reported by Ailred . . . . Calatria is placed between Lothian and Scotland proper, north of the Firths. And Calatria is surely the Cymric Galtraeth,<sup>44</sup> which we know was the same place as Catraeth.<sup>45</sup> All the requirements of the site seem, therefore, satisfied in that part of Scotland where Lothian meets Stirlingshire, in the two districts of Gododin and Catraeth, both washed by the sea of the Firth of Forth; and where the great Roman Wall terminates at Caredin, or the fort of Eidin."<sup>46</sup>

"As to the date of the battle we are not without indications . . . . . The combatants were, on the one side, the Britons and the Scots under Aidan; the enemy or 'Barbari' were the Pagan Saxons and the half-Pagan Picts of Manau Guotodin, called in the poem the 'bedin' or host of Gododin. And the identity of the battle of Catraeth with the 'bellum Miathorum' of Adomnan enables us to fix its date . . . . . at 596. But the first part alone of the poem of the Gododin relates to this battle; the second part, or continuation, contains in it an allusion to the death

<sup>43</sup> This is also the opinion of Mr. Beale Poste; but Mr. Nash and Archdeacon Jones place Manau Guotodin in the district about Jedburgh, and extend it into Northumberland.

<sup>44</sup> For a further account of Calatria see *Chronicles of the Picts and Scots. Introduction*, p. lxxx.

<sup>45</sup> Catraeth is placed by Mr. Pearson "about Galashiels, or near Kelso, and not far from the Kale." *Historical Maps—Britannia Cambrica*. Compare also MADDEN, *Layamon's Brut*. v. III. p. 324.

<sup>46</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. II. p. 366-8.

of Dyfynwal Vrych, or Domnal Breck, which the bard (*not* Aneurin) saw from the heights of Adoyn. The date of this event is known to be in 542. The site is not difficult to fix. *Tighernac* calls it Strathcauin; the *Annals of Ulster*, Strathcairinn. The upper part of the vale of the Carron, through which the river, after rising in the Fintry Hills, flows, is called Strathcarron; but it also bore the name of Strathcawin. . . . . And in the Statistical Account of the parish of Fintry there is the following notice: 'At the foot of the rock which encircles the western brow of the Fintry Hills there is a considerable extent of table-land, and on the descent below this starts out a knoll, *commonly known by the name of the Dun or Down*, of a singular appearance. Its front is a perpendicular rock, fifty feet high. The western extremity of this rock is one solid mass.' This is surely the height of Adoyn."<sup>46</sup> And having here, at Caredin, viewed the site of the battle which is the subject of that first part of the *Gododin*, composed by Aneurin, we shall, in exploring the Lennox on our returning northern route, have an opportunity of visiting the scene of the battle celebrated by the later bard, who was the author of the second part of the poem.

I found that there had been recently discovered, near Caredin, a stone with an inscription in admirable preservation, of the Second Augustan Legion, on completing a certain distance of the wall under Antoninus Pius. And near this, at the eastern end of the wall, was that linguistically famous town "*qui sermone Pictorum Peanfahel, lingua autem Anglorum Peneltun appellatur*," as Bede<sup>47</sup> writes; and as Nennius<sup>48</sup> names it, "*Penguaul, quæ villa Scottice Cenail . . . . . dicitur*." Passing through the dismally dirty town of Burrowstowness, I turned up towards Linlithgow again. While enjoying, towards the top of the steep ascent, the splendour of the sunset over the river, and estuary of the Forth,

<sup>46</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. II. pp. 369-70. Compare also v. I. pp. 177-8.

<sup>47</sup> *Historia Ecclesiæ*, l. 2.

<sup>48</sup> *Historia Britanum*, § 23.

the Frenessicum, or Frisicum Mare, (Frisian Sea) of Nennias;<sup>49</sup> the Frisian shore, where stood in the Arthurian Age that monastery of Culross in which the young Kentigern was placed under the discipline of St. Servanus;<sup>50</sup> the sands on which, in a later age, Sir Patrick Spens was walking when he received the king's (Alexander III.) "braid letter,"—

"To Noroway, to Noroway,  
To Noroway o'er the faem,  
The king's daughter to Noroway,  
It's thou maun tak her hame;"—

the royal Dunfermline in the Abbey of which, the chief Burial-place of the kings of Scotland, is the tomb of Robert the Bruce; and Loch Leven, with its romantic memories of Mary Queen of Scots, a fine-looking fellow, but of unmistakeably English aspect, came-up, with whom our common admiration of the glorious scene drew me into conversation. Walking on with him, he invited me into his house to have a cup of tea; and I found that he and his wife, a fair and hearty girl with a charming Northumbrian *burr*, one 'darlin' in her arms, and another at her feet, as she bustled about, were one of many English families of the artisan class, now invited into, and peacefully settled in this district, where their ancestors had had to maintain themselves by such hard fighting. Their happy looking home, kindness, and hospitality, could not but bring into vivid contrast in my mind the present times, and those we may hope they are preparing, with those of that Pre-mediæval Arthurian age of which I had been thinking, and which had been so truly described by my last road-side acquaintance, the old stone-breaker of Bouden Hill, when he said, "I'm thinkin' that in thae days,—aye, it'll be mair nor a thoosan years ago,—there were hereawa jist vawrious wild tribes a' fechtin thro' ither."

<sup>49</sup> For the Durham MS. adds "quod inter nos Scotosque est;" and Jocelyn (*Vita Kentigerni*) terms the shore of Culross "Frisicum litus."

<sup>50</sup> As Kentigern's Life by Jocelyn in PINKERTON'S *Vitas Antiquissimorum Sanctorum* is very rare, I may refer to the compilation in BUTLER, *Lives of the Saints*, v. I. p. 139.

Irongath Hill on the east side of the river Avon near Linlithgow appears to be the Agathes of the *Book of Taliessin*.<sup>51</sup> For the Avon is, in the *Gododin*, called the Aeron, and probably appears in the first part of the name "Iron." Sir R. Sibbald in his *History of Linlithgowshire* says "The tradition is current that there was a fight between the Romans and the natives under Argadus in this hill, and that it had its name from Argad;" which was the name of a son of Llywarch Hen.<sup>52</sup> Journeying to Edinburgh, we pass Dalmeny, which appears to be identifiable with the *Caer Govannon* of the Red Book of Hergest.<sup>53</sup> For in an old list of the churches of Linlithgow, printed by Reiner, appears "*Vicaria de Qumanyn*;" and Dalmeny was formerly called *Dumanyn*.<sup>54</sup> Abercorn on the Firth, where was anciently a famous monastery, is the *Abercurnig* of Gildas. Cramond or *Caer Amond*, which may be identified with *Caer Vaudwy*.<sup>55</sup>

"Before *Caer Vaudwy* a host I saw  
Shields were shattered and ribs broken."<sup>56</sup>

And when we went with Arthur of anxious memory  
Except seven, none returned from *Caer Vaudwy*."<sup>57</sup>

*Caer Sidi* of the *Book of Taliessin*<sup>58</sup> would appear to have been upon an island, and is, according to Mr. Skene, probably the *Urbs Judeu* of Nennius,<sup>59</sup> and Bede's island city of *Giudi*, which we may with great probability place on Inchkeith, in the Firth of Forth.<sup>60</sup> And between six or seven miles from Edinburgh we find the famous *Catstane*, the inscription on which Sir James Simpson reads as recording the grave of *Vecta*, the grandfather of *Hengist* and *Horsa*.<sup>61</sup>

At Edinburgh we find the site of Arthur's eleventh battle, which was fought "*in monte qui dicitur Agned*,"—that is, *Mynydd Agned*,

<sup>51</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 337.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.* v. II. p. 401.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.* v. I. p. 287.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.* v. II. p. 452.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.* v. II. p. 411 and 352.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.* v. I. p. 294.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.* v. I. p. 265.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.* v. I. p. 276.

<sup>59</sup> The *Judeu*, however, of Nennius, Mr. Pearson places in the *Jedburgh* district.

<sup>60</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. II. p. 408.

<sup>61</sup> On the *Catstane*, *Kirkliston*, etc., in *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, v. IV. p. 119 *et seq.*

the Painted Mount, which seems to be clearly identified with Edinburgh, the southern stronghold of the Picts;<sup>62</sup> against whom, under the name of *Cathbregon*, "contra illos que nos Cathbregyon appellamus," and not against the Saxons, this eleventh battle would appear to have been fought. And it may be noted that the words which form the root of the epithets Cath Bregon and Brithwryr, are, "*Brith*, forming in the feminine *Braith*, *Diversicolor*, *Maculosus*, and *Brych*—the equivalent in Cymric of the Gaelic *Breac*—*Macula*. Both refer to the name *Picti*, or painted: and *Agned* probably comes from an obsolete word, *agneaw*, to paint, *agneaid*, painted."<sup>63</sup> In a poem referring to Arthur the Guledig, in the *Black Book of Caermarthen*, we read—

"In Mynydd Eiddin  
He contended with Cynvyn  
By the hundred there they fell,  
There they fell by the hundred,  
Before the accomplished Bedwyr.  
On the strands of Trywruid,"<sup>64</sup> etc.

Edinburgh, or rather its Castle, appears also under the name of *Castrum Puellarum*, in the Charters, and of the Castle of Maidens, and Dolorous Valley in the Romances. "Arthur's Seat," says Chalmers, in a note to which he had been incited by the remark of "a late inquirer," who had said that it was "a name of yesterday," "had that distinguished name before the publication of Camden's *Britannia* in 1585, as we may see in p. 478; and before the publication of Major in 1521, as appears in fol. 28; and even before the end of the 15th century, as Kennedy, in his flying with Dunbar, mentions *Arthur Sate* or only *Hicher Hill*."<sup>65</sup>

Proceeding from Edinburgh towards Haddington, we may make an excursion to Trapender, formerly Dunpender, and more anciently Dunpeledur Law. Here is said to have been buried that Llew, or Lothus, in whose establishment by Arthur, as a (tributary?) king of

<sup>62</sup> MADDEN, *Layamon's Brut*. v. III. pp. 315-6.

<sup>63</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I., p. 84.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.* v. I. p. 263; cf. also p. 276.

<sup>65</sup> *Oaledonia*, v. I., p. 245; and RAMSAY'S *Evergreen*, v. II., p. 65.

Lothian, the battle of Mynydd Agned seems to have resulted. On Dunpeledur also, as likewise on the three fortified rocks of Edinburgh, Stirling, and Dumbarton, at Dundonald, in Ayrshire, and Chilmacase, in Galloway, S. Monenna or Darerca of Kilsilleibeculean, in Ulster, founded a church, and nunnery.<sup>66</sup> These foundations appear to synchronise with the re-establishment of the Christian Church in these districts by Arthur, who was pre-eminently a Christian hero fighting against pagan Saxons and apostate Picts. And it seems not improbable that Thenew, the daughter of King Lothus, was one of the virgins in the church in Dunpeledur. About the time of S. Monenna's death, however, in the year 518, this royal virgin had the misfortune to give birth to a fine boy, who afterwards became the apostolic missionary Kentigern, now more commonly remembered as S. Mungo.<sup>67</sup> And as her story of an immaculate conception did not meet with due credence among the barbarians; after an attempt to put her to death, in one legend on Dunpeledur (or Dunder), in another on Kepduff, now Kilduff, she was cast adrift in a boat from Aberlady Bay.<sup>68</sup> And this romantic incident, putting us in mind of the similar story of Custaunce being sent adrift by the constable of Alla, King of Northumberland—

“ But in the same schip as he hire found,  
Hire and hire yonge soné, and all hire gere,  
He shulde put, and croude here fro the londe,  
And charge hire, that sche never eft come there.  
Hir litel child lay wepyng in hire arm,  
And in hire arme sche lulleth it ful faste,  
And unto heven hire eyghen up sche caste ”—<sup>69</sup>

may be an inducement to visit the scene of it.

<sup>66</sup> Hence, perhaps, the name of *Castle of Maidens* applied to Edinburgh?

<sup>67</sup> Mungu is translated by Jocelyn “*Carus amicus*.” It is Welsh, and found thus: *Mwyn, clemens, urbanus, lenis*. Cu, in combination Gu, *Carus*. DAVIES, *Welsh Dictionary*.

<sup>68</sup> Compare *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. pp. 85–6, and the *Vita S. Kentigerni*, by JOCELYN in PINKERTON'S *Vitæ Antiquissimorum Sanctorum*.

<sup>69</sup> CHAUCER, *The Man of Law's Tale*.

In this district also, we must at least notice, if we do not think it worth while to visit, the sites which that writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of 1842, before mentioned,<sup>70</sup> fixed on as the probable scenes of Arthur's four battles on the Dubglas, or Duglas, and his sixth battle on the Bassas. The former battle he places on "the little river Dunglas, which has formed through successive ages the southern boundary of Lothian;" and, he continues, "When the Saxons were driven from their entrenchments on the Dunglas, their flight was directed" northwards; and, "forced again to face their foes beside the channel which separates the mainland from the remarkable isolated rock in the Frith of Forth, near the town of North Berwick, called the Bass, and which, by a trivial error, the historian designates 'the river Bassas,' the Saxons sustained a sixth defeat."<sup>71</sup> The battles on the Du(b)glas "in regione Linnuis" we shall, however, before the end of our journey, find, I think, to have been more probably situated on the Douglas in the *Lennox*, than here on the Dunglas in *Lothian*. And a more probable site of the battle on the Bassas we have, I venture to think, already found on the Bonny, at Dunipais (or Dunipaice). Finally, on our way into the next Arthurian district we shall pass on the borders of the counties of Edinburgh and Peebles, the Moss of Maw mentioned in the *Book of Taliessin* as the Bush of Maw.<sup>72</sup>

We enter now on the exploration of *District III.—Tweeddale*.—At Peebles on the Tweed, or Tywi of the *Four Ancient Books*,<sup>73</sup> we find one of the many wells, or fountains, dedicated to S. Mungo, the legend of whose birth we have just noticed. And we are here in the heart of the *Nemus Caledonis* whither Merlin is said, in the Latin *Vita Merlini*, to have fled after the battle of Arderyth, and where, according to the tradition re-

<sup>70</sup> Ch. I. p. xxxii.

<sup>71</sup> *Gentleman's Magazine*, v. XVII., N. S., 1842, p. 598.

<sup>72</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 337, and v. II. p. 401.

<sup>73</sup> Vol. I. pp. 373, 432, 470 seq., 490 seq.; v. II. p. 337.

ported by Fordun,<sup>74</sup> he met Kentigern, and afterwards was slain by the shepherds of Meldredus, a regulus of the country on the banks of the Tweed, "prope oppidum Dunmeller." So, from the Broughton station I set out on foot for Merlin's Grave at Drummelzier, in which the name of Meldredus is preserved, according to Mr. Skene,<sup>75</sup> and that of Merlin according to M. de la Villemarqué.<sup>76</sup>

" Questa è l'antiqua e memorabil grotta,  
Ch'edificò Merlino, il savio Mago  
Che forse ricordare odi tal' otta,  
Dove ingannollo la Donna del Lago." <sup>77</sup>

Crossing to the south bank of the Tweed, and reaching the ancient parish church and kirkton, or hamlet, by the Pausayl (*i.e.* Willow) Burn, I was fortunate in making the acquaintance of the intelligent shoemaker of the place. From his account there seemed to be some doubt as to which of two localities here had the best traditional right to be called the Grave of Merlin. That now certainly the most picturesque, and maintained by the late Dr. Somerville, the minister of the parish, to be the true site of the tomb, is by an ancient thorn-tree, of which there is now a younger thriving offshoot (fair augury of a renewal of Merlin's fame), by the burnside, a little above its junction with the Tweed, and at the foot of the moraine, on which stands the kirk and manse. But it seems that, at the corner of what is now a corn-field, there used to be a cairn, called Merlin's Grave; and though the Pausayl does not at present meet the Tweed at this spot, yet it did so for a time, in consequence of a great spaet or overflow of the river, when the Scottish James VI. became king of England, and so the prophecy was fulfilled that

" When Tweed and Pausayl meet at Merlin's grave,  
Scotland and England one king shall have." <sup>78</sup>

For me, not only the weight of authority, but the perennial

<sup>74</sup> *Scotichronicon*, B. III. C. xxvi.

<sup>75</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 54.

<sup>76</sup> *Myrdhin, ou L'Enchanteur Merlin*, p. 3.

<sup>77</sup> *ARIOSTO, Orlando Furioso*, C. III. S. 10.

<sup>78</sup> See CHAMBERS, *History of Peeblesshire*, and PENNYCUICK, *History of Tweeddale*, p. 26.



thorn-tree decides the matter. For this is always introduced in the romantic fictions that represent his ladye-love, Viviana,<sup>79</sup> as imprisoning Merlin, not, in the earlier romances, at least, that she might basely triumph over him, but that he might be with her for evermore. And though, in its present disafforested state, the scenery of the here narrow valley of the Tweed, and its enclosing hills is somewhat disappointing; it cannot be looked on with indifference by any one who knows how, “la plus ancienne tradition romanesque a fait agir Merlin, comment elle a personnifié et idéalisé en lui le dévouement passionné à tout ce que la grande époque chevaleresque jugeait digne de son respect; je veux dire la religion, la patrie, la royauté, l’amour, l’amour pur, discret, délicat, la solitude à deux éternellement enchantée.”<sup>80</sup> And well may the French *savant* in his history of the bard, his works, and influence, refuse to follow him,—“à travers les fantaisies des continuateurs et

<sup>79</sup> “It also seems evident,” says the Rev. T. Price, “that it is to the Hwimleian, or Chwifseian of Merlinus Sylvestris,” the historical Merlin of Scotland, “that we are to attribute the origin of the Viviane of the romances of Chivalry, and who acts so conspicuous a part in those compositions, although it is true there is not much resemblance betwixt the two names. But if we look into the poems of Merlin Sylvestris, we shall find that the female personage of this name, which by the French romances might easily be modified into Viviane, is repeatedly referred to by the bard in his vaticinations. It also seems probable, as Chwifseian signifies a female who appears and disappears, and also as the word bears some resemblance in sound to Sybilla, that the bard, by a confusion of terms and ideas, not uncommon in early writers, coined this name as an appellation for some imaginary character, and thus furnished the original of Viviane.” *Literary Remains*, v. I. p. 144. This Merlin also had a twin-sister Gwendydd or Ganiada, who supplied her brother with food, in his solitary wanderings in the Caledonian Forest. In a poem in the *Red Book of Hergest* (*Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 462) she addresses him as *Llallogan* or twin-brother. “And this,” says Mr. Price, “will explain a passage in the Life of S. Kentigern, in which it is said that there was at the court of Rydderch Hael, a certain idiot named *Laloicen*, who uttered predictions:—‘In curia ejus quidam homo fatuus vocabulo Laloicen;’ and in the *Scotichronicon* it is stated that this Laloicen was *Myrddin Wyllt*. By connecting these several particulars we find an air of truth cast over the history of this bard, as regards the principal incident of his life, and there can be no reason to doubt that some of the poetry attributed to him was actually his composition.” *Literary Remains*, v. I. p. 143. Cited *Four Ancient Books*, v. II. pp. 353 and 424.

<sup>80</sup> VILLEMARQUE, *Merlin*, p. 234.

des imitateurs de son noble panégyriste, Robert de Borron. L'esprit grivois et goguenard y remplace progressivement l'esprit moral et grave passé de la tradition bretonne dans l'œuvre française primitive. Le sentiment est chassé trop souvent par le rire ; ce qui est élevé par ce qui est plat ; le sérieux par l'amusant. A la fin, Merlin sera plus ou moins moulé sur le type scolastique et vulgaire du savant devenu fou d'orgueil, du sage Salomon que séduisent les femmes étrangères, du poète Lucrèce que la perfide Lucile empoisonne, du vieillard de la comédie, victime de sa sotte passion. Et la verve de Rabelais, pas plus que l'art de Tennyson, ne parviendront complètement à vaincre la pitié qu'inspirera cette figure tombante."<sup>81</sup>

In the legends and romances of Merlin mention is ever made of a fountain, by which he used to meet his lady fair, and around which, as is the wont of love, he caused to spring up an enchanted Garden of Joy. Of no well, or fountain, however, could I hear either with the name, or a tradition, of Merlin attached to it. The sources, or wells of Tweed, though at an elevation of 1500 feet, lie in a hollow of the mountains, and, therefore, do not, as I should have liked to find, correspond with the description of the Fountain of the Caledonian Merlin, given in the *Vita Merlini*, of the 12th century, ascribed to Geoffrey of Monmouth. But in crossing the mountains here, that central mountain-district of the east of Scotland, which separates Tweeddale from Annan-dale and Moffat-dale, and where, at no great distance apart, are to be found the sources of the eastward-flowing Tweed, the westward-running Clyde, and the southward-falling Annan, I found many other fountains to which Geoffrey's (?) lines would apply :

"Fons erat in summo"cujsdam vertice montis,  
Undique præinctus corulis, densisque fructibus,  
Illic Merlinus consederat ; inde per omnes  
Spectabat silvas, cursusque, jocosque ferarum."<sup>82</sup>

<sup>81</sup> VILLEMARQUE, *Merlin*, p. 234.

<sup>82</sup> *Vita Merlini*, ll. 138-141 in SAN-MARTE (SCHULTZ) *Die Sagen von Merlin*, p. 277.

After journeying past deep ravines, and shadowy mountain nooks ; through dales, over the steep green sides of which swept the swift shadows of the clouds, and fell, in silver torrents, many a waterfall ; through a country, in which the long presence of a large Saxon element in its population was witnessed-to by the vulgarity of the names — Devil's Beef-tub, Grey Mare's Tail, etc.—by which so many of its finest scenes were profaned ;<sup>83</sup> I passed a night at the famous cottage of Tibbie Shiels, where I was sorry to find the old housekeeper of the Ettrick Shepherd on her death-bed ; and so, the next day, on, through Ettrick Forest. Somewhere in this district must have been fought Arthur's seventh battle “ ‘ in silva Caledonis id est cat Coit Celeddon,’—that is, the battle was so called, for *Cat* means ‘battle,’ and *Coed Celyddon*, ‘the wood of Celyddon.’ . . . of which the forests of Selkirk and Ettrick formed a part ; ”<sup>84</sup> and which is mentioned along with the Teifi or Teviot in a poem relating to the battle of Arderydd in the *Black Book of Caermarthen*.

“Seven score generous ones have gone to the shades ;  
In the wood of Celyddon they came to their end.”<sup>85</sup>

On the Teviot, also, Mr. Pearson<sup>86</sup> places the Din Guortigern, mentioned by Nennius.

Coming to Melrose by Abbotsford we pass through the Rhymer's Glen and by the Huntly Burn :

“True Thomas lay on Huntlie bank ;  
A ferlie he spied wi' his ee ;  
And there he saw a ladye bright,  
Come riding down by the Eildon Tree.”<sup>87</sup>

<sup>83</sup> “As the Saxon names of places, with the pleasant wholesome smack of the soil in them—Weathersfield, Thaxted, Shalford—are to the Celtic names of places, with their penetrating lofty beauty—Velindra, Tyntagel, Caernarvon,—so is the homely realism of German and Norse nature to the fairy-like loveliness of Celtic nature.”—ARNOLD, *Study of Celtic Literature*, p. 159. Sir Walter Scott certainly makes the best of the *Grey Mare's Tail* when he says of this cataract of 200 feet that it,

“White as the snowy charger's tail,  
Drives down the pass of Moffatdale.”—*Marmion, Introd. to Canto 2*.

<sup>84</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 54.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.* v. I. p. 370 ; v. II. pp. 18 and 337.

<sup>86</sup> *Historical Maps—Britannia Cambriæ*.

<sup>87</sup> SCOTT, *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border. Thomas the Rhymer, Part 1*.

Immediately to the south of Melrose, the Melros of Nennius, rise those three summits of the Eildons, the *Tremontium* of the Romans, which Mr. Nash identifies with the Din Drei of Aneurin, and near which he places the site of the battle celebrated in the *Gododin*.<sup>88</sup> These three summits also with their various weirdly appurtenants—the Windmill of Kippielaw, the Lucken Hare, and the Eildon Tree—mark the domes of those vast subterranean Halls, in which all the Arthurian Chivalry await, in an enchanted sleep, the bugle-blast of the Adventurer who will call them at length to a new life. And it is to be noted also that there are on the Eildons the remains of a fortified camp, and at their foot a Bowden Burn and Bowden Moor, at the further end of which is another hill with the remains of fortifications. There is not, however, an Avon here to enable us to oppose this site to that which Mr. Skene has identified as the *Mons Badonis* of Arthur's twelfth battle.

Crossing the winding Tweed, we find "six miles to the west of that heretofore noble and eminent monastery of Meilros," Gwaedol, or "Wedale, in English Wodale, in Latin Vallis Doloris." Here, at Stowe, was the church of Saint Mary, where were once "preserved, in great veneration, the fragments of that image of the Holy Virgin, Mother of God," which Arthur, on his return from Jerusalem,<sup>89</sup> "bore upon his shoulders, and through the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Mary, put the Saxons to flight, and pursued them the whole day with great slaughter."<sup>90</sup> Not far from this church at Stowe, dedicated to S. Mary, General Roy places a Roman fort; and thus the site of Arthur's eighth battle "in Castello

<sup>88</sup> *On the History of the Battle of Cattraeth and the Gododin of Aneurin*, in *The Cambrian Journal*, 1861.

<sup>89</sup> Pilgrims from Britain are mentioned by S. Jerome. There is, therefore, no historical improbability in the legends of Arthur's pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre.

<sup>90</sup> *Harleian MS.* of the *Historia Britonum*. Henry of Huntingdon, who likewise gives this account, says the image was upon his shield; and, as in Welsh, *ysgwyd* is a shoulder, and *ysgwydd*, a shield, a Welsh original must have been differently translated by the two authors.

Guinnion" is very plainly indicated.<sup>91</sup> This Guinnion also appears in the Garanwynyon mentioned in the poem in the *Book of Taliessin* on the battle of Gwenystrad or the White Strath, thus also identified with the valley of the Gala Water.

"In defending Gwenystrad was seen  
A mound and slanting ground obstructing

Hand on the cross they wail on the gravel bank of Garanwynyon."

And the White Stone of Galystem (in which the name Gala seems contained), referred to in the succeeding lines,

"I saw a brow covered with rage on Urien,  
When he furiously attacked his foes at the White Stone  
Of Galystem,"<sup>92</sup>

is probably the stone mentioned in the *Statistical Account*: "A little above it (S. Mary's Church of Stow) is a very fine perennial spring, known by the name of the Lady's Well, and a huge stone, recently removed in forming the new road, but now broken to pieces, used to be pointed out as impressed with the print of the Virgin Mary's foot." In the Verses of the Graves also this valley seems to be alluded to.<sup>93</sup>

Crossing from Stowe to Lauder, and journeying down the Leader Water we come to the Rhymer's Tower; on a beautiful haugh or meadow by the waterside. Here in his Castle of Ercildoune, of which these are the ruins, lived Thomas the Rhymer, whom so many traditions connect with Arthurian Romance, in representing him as the unwilling, and too quickly vanishing guide of those adventurous spirits who have entered the mysterious Halls beneath the Eildons, and attempted to achieve the re-awakening of Arthur and his knights, but only to be cast forth, amid the thunders of the fateful words:—

"Woe to the Coward that ever he was born,  
Who did not draw the Sword, before he blew the Horn."<sup>94</sup>

<sup>91</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 55.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.* v. I. pp. 343-4.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.* v. II. p. 412.

<sup>94</sup> See *Appendix to General Preface to Waverley*.

And hence it is to "True Thomas," still "doomed to revisit Eildon's fated Tree," that Leyden appeals to

"Say who is he with summons long and high,  
Shall bid the charmed sleep of Ages fly;  
Roll the long sound through Eildon's caverns vast,  
While each dark warrior kindles at the blast;  
The Horn, the Falchion grasp with mighty hand,  
And peal proud Arthur's march from Fairyland."<sup>95</sup>

From Ercildoune, or Earlstoun, we journey to Kelso, which is mentioned in the *Book of Taliessin* as Calchvynydd.<sup>96</sup> This literally means "Chalk mountain," and Chalmers says, "It seems to have derived its ancient name of Calchow from a calcareous eminence, which appears conspicuous in the middle of the town, and which is still called the Chalk Heugh."<sup>97</sup> At no great distance to the south of Kelso is Jedburgh, identified by Mr. Pearson with the Judeu and Atbret Judeu of Nennius;<sup>98</sup> and Mr. Nash and the Ven. Archdeacon Jones, placing Manau Guotodin further south than Mr. Skene would do, extend it beyond Jedburgh, and so as to include Northumberland.<sup>99</sup>

Though properly, perhaps, belonging to the next district, we shall find it more convenient to include in our exploration of *Tweeddale* that river Glen, one of the indirect tributaries of the Tweed, which the above-quoted writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine* identifies with the Glein or Gleni, at the mouth of which took place the first battle in which Arthur was engaged. "Near the junction of the Glen with the Till rises a lofty hill, called from its shape 'Weaving Bell,' on the summit of which are to be seen to this day the remains of a rude fortress of immense strength, and nearly inaccessible position. The hill rises abruptly to the height of upwards of 2000

<sup>95</sup> *Scenes of Infancy*, Part II.

<sup>96</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 363, and v. II. p. 162.

<sup>97</sup> *Caledonia*, v. II. p. 146.

<sup>98</sup> *Historical Maps—Britannia Cambrica*.

<sup>99</sup> *On the History of the Battle of Cattraeth*, etc., in *The Cambrian Journal*, 1861.

feet, the summit being attained by a winding path on its south-east side, and presenting a level plain of about 12 acres. . . . . In the midst is an elevated citadel. . . . . That this was at a later period a royal fortress of the Saxons we know on the authority of Bede. . . . . And that Weaving was a fortress of the Britons, before it fell into the hands of the Saxons . . . . . is supported by the tradition of ages. . . . . On the invasion of their country by a superior force, the Ottodeni naturally sought refuge in this fortress. . . . . In their behalf, Arthur first drew his sword upon the Saxons. . . . . Its position near the capital of Bernicia, and its celebrity from the ministration of Paulinus and the narrative of Bede, account for this river being mentioned without any allusion (as in the case of the Douglas) to the region in which it flowed."<sup>100</sup>

Along the Border-country we note an almost endless number of places, famous in story, among which we must, at least, name Carham as the scene of the battle which finally added the Saxon Lothians to the Celtic kingdom of Malcolm II. in 1018.<sup>101</sup> And so, on to Berwick, formerly Aberwick. And, though now fallen into comparative decay and insignificance,—crowning, as it does, the northern heights at the mouth of the Tweed, looking eastward on the sea, that dashes up to high caverned cliffs, and commanding westward the vale of the beautiful river, here flowing between steep braes, shadowy with trees, or bright with corn and pasture,—Berwick, but for the dulness within its walls, seems still almost as worthy of being called Joyeuse Garde as, both from its real and romance history of siege, conquest, and reconquest, it is of being remembered as Dolorous Garde.<sup>102</sup>

<sup>100</sup> *Gentleman's Magazine*, v. XVII. (1842), p. 59.

<sup>101</sup> See ROBERTSON, *Scotland under Her Early Kings*, v. I. p. 96, n.

<sup>102</sup> See SCOTT, *Romance of Sir Tristram*, Introduction, p. xxxvii. See also BURTON, *History of Scotland*, v. I. p. 177.

## SECTION (II).

*The Southern Division of Arthurian Scotland.*

From the still preserved ramparts of Berwick I observed, away to the south, a great pyramid-like mass by the sea; and, on asking what this was, I was told it was Bamborough Castle. "Ah," said I to myself, "the Chatel Orgueilleux of Romance<sup>103</sup> and the Dinguaroy and Bebbanburgh of Nennius." So, entering on the exploration of *District IV.—Northumberland*, I went by train to the Belford station, whence it is some five miles to the little model village under the Castle-rock. And whatever may on other grounds be said of the expenditure of the funds vested for certain charitable purposes in the Trustees to whom this ancient Castle, with its valuable estates, now belongs, an Arthurian antiquary can hardly but be grateful to them for enabling him to enter, what might easily be imagined one of the very castles of which he has been reading. Occupying the whole extent of a solitary eminence, it stands among sandy downs, close by the sea, and overlooking a wide plain at the foot of the Cheviots. Nearly opposite the Castle are the Faroe Islands. And journeying five or six miles over the sands when the tide is out, and a mile by boat, one reaches Lindisfarne, the Medgaud of Nennius, opposite which, on the mainland, is the Lleu. Having visited the Abbey of the Holy Island of St. Cuthbert,—like Iona, whence the saintly Aidan came here as a missionary, a primitive seat of Christianity,—and where, as I thought, there ought to have been a tradition of its having been the retreat of Sir Lancelot after the discovery of his treason, and his final separation from the Queen; I regained the mainland, and Beal station, in a slow, jolting cart, chased by the too swiftly incoming tide, but amusing myself thinking of the still worse

<sup>103</sup> SCOTT, *Romance of Sir Tristrem*, Introduction, p. xxxvii.



jolting Sir Lancelot underwent, and the ludicrous disgrace brought upon him by his accepting the offer of the dwarf to guide him to the captive Guenivere, would the knight but leave his disabled horse, and get into "la charette," the filthy cart of the dwarf.<sup>104</sup>

The references to Northumberland in the Romances are very frequent. It was in the forest of Northumberland that dwelt the Hermit Blaise to whom Merlin is represented as so often repairing, in order that being "a nobill clerk and subtile," he might put in writing all the wonderful things that befell in those days. And one chapter, for instance, of the French Romance of Lancelot is headed, "Comment la Dame de Noehault envoya deuers le Roy Artus, luy supplier quil luy envoya secours contre le Roy de Norhombellando qui luy menoit guerre." Northumberland also formed part of the Berneich of Nennius, the Tir Brenech of Llywarch Hen, and the Brenneich of Aneurin, the Anglic kingdom of Bernicia. And in the suburbs of its chief town, Newcastle, we find Arthur's Hill.

We are now on the Tyne, the south-eastern boundary of Arthurian Scotland. But, before turning westward, we must note that, but a little way over the frontier is York, Eboracum, with which the name of the father of Perceval, that famous knight of the Quest of the Holy Grail is connected. For he is always mentioned as Ebrauk or Evrok of the North.<sup>105</sup> But, under his earlier Cymric name of Peredur, Perceval is brought into more direct connection with Arthurian Scotland in his relations with Merlin in the Caledonian Forest—

"Venerat ad bellum Merlinus cum Pereduro

.....  
Solatur Peredurus eum,"—<sup>106</sup>

<sup>104</sup> From this adventure a metrical romance, composed by Chestien de Troyes in the twelfth century, takes its title *La Charette*.

<sup>105</sup> VILLEMARQUE, *Romans de la Table Ronde*, pp. 321 and 395.

<sup>106</sup> *Vita Merlini*, l. 31 and l. 68. SAN MARTIN (SCHULTZ), *Die Sagen von Merlin*, pp. 274-5.

and as one of the chiefs mentioned by Aneurin in the *Gododin* as having fallen at the battle of Cattraeth :

"Peredur with steel arms, Gwawrddur, and Aeddan,  
A defence were they in the tumult, though with shattered shields."<sup>107</sup>

Turning now westward, and passing through the picturesquely-situated old town of Hexham, with its Moot Hall and Abbey Church, on a wooded ridge over-hanging the Tyne, we stop either at the Haydon Bridge, or the Bardon Mill station of the Carlisle and Newcastle Railway. For six or eight miles to the north of these stations, and in the neighbourhood of Housesteads, the most complete of the stations on the Roman Wall, are the principal Arthurian Localities of this Northumbrian District. The scenery here is very remarkable. The green, but unwooded grazing hills,—wide and wild-looking from their want of enclosures, and the infrequency of farm-houses,—seem like the vast billows of a north-sweeping tide. Along one of these wave-lines runs the Roman Wall, with the stations of its garrison. In the trough, as it were, of this mighty sea, and to the north of the Wall, were, till a few years ago removed and ploughed over, the ruins of the ancient castle of Sewing Shields, referred to by Sir Walter Scott as the Castle of the Seven Shields,<sup>108</sup> and by Camden as Seavenshale.<sup>109</sup> Beneath it, as under the Eildons, Arthur and all his court are said to lie in an enchanted sleep. And here also tradition avers that the passage to these Subterranean Halls, having once on a time, been found, but the wrong choice having been made in the attempt to achieve the adventure, and call the Chivalry of the Table Rounde to life again, the unfortunate adventurer was cast forth with these ominous words ringing in his ears :

<sup>107</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 386. Compare also GUEST (Lady Charlotte) *Mabinogion, Notes to Peredur the Son of Eborac*, v. I. p. 371.

<sup>108</sup> *Harold the Dauntless*, s. VI.

<sup>109</sup> BRUCE, *The Roman Wall*, p. 175.

“O woe betide that evil day  
On which this witless wight was born,  
Who drew the Sword, the Garter cut,  
But never blew the Bugle-horn”—<sup>110</sup>

the very opposite mistake, it will be observed, to that of which the equally luckless Eildon adventurer was guilty.

The northern faces of three successive billows here, if I may so call them, present fine precipitous crags,—whinstone and sandstone strata cropping out. These are called respectively Sewing Shields Crags, the King's, and the Queen's Crags. Along the crest of the first of these the Roman Wall is carried. The others take their name from having been the scene of a little domestic quarrel, or tiff, between King Arthur and Queen Quenivere. To settle the matter, the king sitting on a rock called Arthur's Chair, threw at the queen an immense boulder which, falling somewhat short of its aim, is still to be seen on this side of the Queen's Crags. And on the horizon of the immense sheep farm of Sewing Shields, and beyond an outlying shepherd's hut, very appropriately named Coldknuckles, is a great stone called Cumming's Cross, to which there is attached another rude Arthurian tradition. For here, they say, that King Arthur's sons attacked, and murdered a northern chieftain who had been visiting their father at Sewing Shields Castle, and who was going home with too substantial proofs, as they thought, of the king's generosity.

Thence, over a most bracingly wild, wide-horizoned, and open Border-country to Liddesdale.<sup>111</sup> At the head of this famous dale we find Dawston, which may be reckoned among localities of the Arthurian Age, as the scene of that great battle of Dagesstan of 603, in which Aidan, who seems to have been, like Arthur some sixty years before, performing the functions of *Guledig* or “Dux

<sup>110</sup> HODGSON, *History of Northumberland*, Part II. v. III. p. 287.

<sup>111</sup> Liddesdale is, of course, known to be within the political frontier of Scotland, though its Arthurian localities are here treated of partly as belonging to the district of Northumberland, and partly to that of Cumberland.

Bellorum" in the North, led a combined force of Scots and Britons against the Angles of Bernicia, under Ethelfrid; only, however, to meet with a crushing defeat.<sup>113</sup>

But our next and more strictly Arthurian locality, a hill, on the eastern side of the valley, called Arthur's Seat—the third locality of that name we have found in the course of our journey—we must place in *District V.—Cumberland*. The chief object, however, of our exploration of Liddesdale, is the locality of the great battle of Arderydd, so often mentioned in the *Four Ancient Books*, in the *Triads*, and in the *Vita Merlini*. "Concealed under these extravagant fables, we can see," says Mr. Skene, "the outlines of one of those great historical struggles which alter the fate of a country. . . . It was, in short, a great struggle between the supporters of the advancing Christianity and the departing Paganism, in which the former were victorious. That it was an historical event, and that this was its character, appears from this, that it occurs in the *Annales Cambriæ*, as a real event about the year 573; 'Bellum Armterid inter filios Elifer et Gwendoleu filium Keidiau in quo bello Gwendoleu cecidit. Merlinus insanus effectus est;' and that 573 is the first year of the reign of Rhydderch over Strathclyde, and of Aidan, over Dalriada,"<sup>113</sup>—these being the leaders of the Christian party.

Where, then, was this battle fought? It was a passage in the *Vita S. Kentigerni*, quoted by M. de la Villemarqué,<sup>114</sup> that induced me to look in Liddesdale for its site. Shortly before, however, the same passage had been similarly suggestive to Mr. Skene;

<sup>113</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. pp. 177-8; also v. II. p. 365, where it is said that Mr. Stephens now considers this battle to have been that celebrated in the poems of the Gododin. Donald Brec, who was defeated in the battle of Strathcawin,—the subject, according to Mr. Skene, of the second part of these poems,—was the son of this Aidan.

<sup>113</sup> *Notice of the Site of the Battle of Arderyth—Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, v. VI. P. I. p. 95 (published in 1867, my visit being in 1866).

<sup>114</sup> *Myrddin, ou L'Enchanteur Merlin*, p. 72.

though his *Notice of the Site of the Battle of Arderyth* was not published till after the identification which was the result of my visit to the place. This passage is as follows. One day that the saint was praying in a wild solitude of the Caledonian Forest, there sprang across his path "quidam demens, nudus et hirsutus, ab omni solatio mundiali destitutus, quasi quoddam torvum furiale." The saint asked this strange being who, or what he was, and received for answer, "Olim Quortigerni vates, Merlinus vocitatus, in hac solitudine dura patiens. . . . . Eram enim cædis omnium causa interemptorum qui interfecti sunt in bello, cunctis in hac patria constitutis satis noto, quod erat in campo inter Lidel et Carwanolow situato."<sup>115</sup>

Carwhinelow is a burn, on which there is a village of the same name, and which flows from Nicholl Forest into the Esk. And some little way above the junction of the Esk, with the Liddel is what is called in the *Statistical Account*, the Moat of Liddel, though known in the country only as the Roman Camp. It is situated on the top of a high bank overhanging the river, to which, on the north side, the rock goes sheer down; while on the other side it is defended by prodigious earthen ramparts which rise from the field to a height of nearly thirty feet. There is a well in the enclosure, and on the west side a second great rampart. "It is obviously," says Mr. Skene, "a native strength." On its east side the ground slopes down till it comes to the level of the river at a place called Ridding, not quite half a mile off. Between the fort and the village of Carwhinelow is a field extending to the ridge along the stream of that name. This, then, is certainly the "campus inter Lidel et Carwanolow situato." The name of Erydon which Merlin gives to the battle probably remains in Ridding at

<sup>115</sup> *Vita S. Kentigerni*, MSS. Mus. Britann. Cf. *FORDUN Scotichronicon*, lib. III. cxxxi. p. 135, ed. Edinb. 1759. See also SCOTT, Introduction to *Thomas the Rhymer*, Part II., in *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*.

the foot of the fort. "And I have no doubt," says Mr. Skene, "that the name Carwhinelow is a corruption of Caerwenddolew, the Caer or city of Gwenddolew,"<sup>116</sup> who, as we have seen, was the leader of the Pagan party, and slain in this battle.

Looking westward from the fort, the eye rests on the gleaming Solway, and southwards, on the knolls of Arthuret, beyond which the Cumberland hills bound the horizon. To Arthuret, then, let us next proceed. For double *d* in Welsh being equivalent to *th*, we can hardly now refuse to recognise in it the name of Arderydd<sup>117</sup> by which the battle is commonly mentioned. Should any doubt remain, it will be dispelled by a visit to the place, which is but some two miles from Longtown. Standing there, on the knolls by Arthuret Church and looking west, with Liddel and Carvanolow behind, a grander battle-plain could hardly be imagined, could the enemy be manœuvred to attack one in a position of which that eminence should be the centre. In the distance behind and around, low hills, except where they rise to a greater height on the Scottish border; in front, the Esk, flowing across the plain, to fall into the Solway Firth, after having been joined by the Line; and bounding the plain, the sea, into which, should the enemy have been unsuccessful in their attack, the victors, fording the river, might drive them in irreparable rout.

At Camelon on the Firth of Forth, we found the site of the battle that closed the career of the historical Arthur in 537. But it was on this scene of the great battle of Arderydd in 573, that it seemed to me, standing on the knolls of Arthuret, that the final Arthurian battle of the Romances might best be imagined to have been fought,—the enemy, driven down from the Moat of Liddel, we have

<sup>116</sup> *Notice of the Site, etc.*, above quoted, p. 98.

<sup>117</sup> Arthuret, as a name, therefore, has nothing whatever to do with Arthur, as Hutchinson supposes (*History of Cumberland*, v. II. p. 545), making it a corruption of Arthur's head; and is mentioned among these Arthurian localities, not because of its connection with Arthur, but with the Arthurian Merlin.

just visited, here making a last stand. For it is Merlin who is the romantic character, *par excellence* of the Romances; and it seemed fitter to make the scene of the last great battle of the Romance Arthur the same as that in which Merlin, who is in the Romances so intimately connected with Arthur, historically "bore the golden torques," than to make the scene of that battle which, in its event, was the departing out of this world of all the Arthurian chivalry, the same as that in which the historical Arthur fell, but at which Merlin was not present. And, besides, here we have a great Western Lake, which suits that primitive mythological element which can, I think, be shown cropping-out with singular frequency in the Arthurian Romance-cycle.

With such thoughts, then, I wandered over the old battle plain, past great farms, or rather agricultural manufactories, with their steam-engines and chimney-stalks, down to and by a primitive wooden bridge mounted on stilts, across the Line. Then, getting on the turnpike-road to Glasgow, I crossed the Esk by an iron bridge, and, a mile or so on the south side of the border, I turned down towards the sea, but some five minutes distant now. The scene I beheld as I went down to the tide, "washing among the reeds," struck me as of a weird and magical beauty. Behind, in the middle of the great plain, was still clearly visible the mound of Arthuret; before me, in the far distance to the right, was the Scottish Criffel, and, to the left, the English Skiddaw; between these, in the sheen of the setting sun, and stretching away amid points of land to the west, so that, whether it was land-locked as a lake, or boundless as a sea, one could not tell, was the Solway. "Here," I thought, "well may one feign that here, even at such a sunset hour as this, after the last fatal battle on the plain above, Excaliber was thrown into the sea; that here it was caught by the fairy hand, and borne aloft, symbol of the hope, and ultimate triumph of the genius of the Celtic race; and there, in the infinite Beyond, is Avalon."

Coming up to Greta Green from the Solway, we proceed to Carlisle, which would appear to be the *Caer Lliwelydd* of the *Book of Taliessin*,<sup>118</sup> and the *Cardueil* of Romance, evens till more famous than the hardly yet identified Camelot, as the favourite residence of King Arthur. And with reason. For beautifully does the Castle- and Cathedral-crowned eminence, swept round by the Eden, the Peteril, and the Caldew, rise from the wide plain that stretches from the Border Hills down to, and along the Solway Firth. Of the Eden there is a tradition that King Arthur's father tried to turn it out of its course :

"Let Uther-pendragon do what he can,  
Eden shall run where Eden ran."<sup>119</sup>

But a visit to the populous modern manufacturing quarter, in the evening, when the hands are loose, (how meaningful is the phrase!) may profitably disturb antiquarian memories, and romantic associations.

From Carlisle, near which would appear to have been the *Guasmoric* of Nennius,<sup>120</sup> our Arthurian pilgrimage takes us southward again through the Inglewood Forest of Romance. From the Southwaite station, we have a walk of something more than two miles, through a beautifully-wooded lane, its waysides luxuriant with wild flowers, to the village of Upper Hesketh. At the "White Ox" I had the good fortune to encounter an intelligent old man, who, taking me to the back of the farmyard, pointed out, down in the hollow, what I was in search of, the famous Tarn Wahethelyne of Ballad and Romance. But Tarn Wadling, as it has been called in later times, has been for the last ten years a wide meadow, grazed by hundreds of sheep. Of the

<sup>118</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 257, and v. II. pp. 200 and 419.

<sup>119</sup> As an illustration of the unlikely places in which one may find the objects of one's search, I may note that I found this tradition mentioned in Mr. Mortimer Collins' novel, *Who is the Heir?* v. I. p. 253.

<sup>120</sup> PEARSON, *Historical Maps—Britannia Cambrica*.



draining of it the old man, the innkeeper as it turned out, who had come from Yorkshire, but had been here for the last fifty years, had a great deal to say. Among the rest, what fun it was to see the swine that belonged to a cottager at the far end of the tarn, get tired of the dead carp, that were cast on the land, and wade in to fish for the "quick uns." But of the story of the Grim Baron whom King Arthur chanced to meet here, whose

—"Strokes were nothing sweet,"<sup>121</sup>

and who refused all other ransom than that the King should, within a year and a day, bring him word "what thing it is that women most desire;" and of the Foul Ladye who, at length, gave, for the courteous Sir Gawayne's sake, the true answer, and who, on her marriage, was so transformed that

"The Queen sayd, and her ladyes alle,  
She is the fayrest nowe in this halle;"—

of how

"This ferly byfelle fulle sothely to fayne  
In Iggillwode Foreste at the Tarn-wathelayne;"<sup>122</sup>

of all this, neither my old friend nor his dame had ever heard, till, sitting by their kitchen fire to dry my clothes, wet with a heavy shower, I told them the tale. And all he knew about King Arthur was that

"When as King Arthur ruled this land,  
He ruled it like a swine;  
He bought three pecks of barleymeal  
To make a pudding fine.  
"His pudding it was noddin well,  
And stuffed right full of plums;  
And lumps of suet he put in  
As big as my two thumbs;"—

a tradition of the "Flos Regum," hitherto, I believe, unnoticed.

Crossing the south end of the Tarn, or rather meadow, and passing through a fir wood, I ascended Blaze Fell, and, from the quarry on

<sup>121</sup> MADDEN, *Romances of Sir Gawayne* (Bannatyne Club).

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

its summit, had a fine view over the undulating, mountain bounded, and still finely wooded ancient forest of Inglewood. Below me was the Tarn; to the west of it, the ridge of Upper Heskett; to the east, an eminence with the site, though no more the ruins, of the Castle Hewin of Romance, the stronghold of the Grim Baron. And behind this eminence the Eden flows past still another locality that recalls his fame, and, with it, the legend of the Marriage of Sir Gawayne, — Baron-wood. This legend belongs, as I think, to the class of Sun-myths; and it may be instructive to compare with it that of the Laidley Worm of Spindleston Heugh, near Bamborough Castle, celebrated in the ballad of 1270 by Duncan Frazier the Bard of Cheviot. As the Foul Lady is transformed into "the fairest in hall," so also is the Laidley Worm, or Loathsome Dragon. For her brother, coming over the Eastern Sea, in a ship with Rowan-tree masts,

". . . sheathed his sword, and bent his bow,  
And gave her kisses three;  
She crept into a hole a Worm,  
And stepped out a Lady."<sup>123</sup>

Returning to the Southwaite Station, we proceed next to Penrith, passing on our way the Plumpton Park and Hatton Hall which Sir Frederic Madden identifies with places of similar names in the Romances of Sir Gawayne.<sup>124</sup> Thence, crossing the narrow but picturesque old bridge of the Eamont, which, flowing from Ulleswater, here separates the counties of Westmoreland and Cumberland, we find, closely adjoining the fine Celtic monument of Mayborough, another such set of circular embankments round a flat-surfaced central mound as we found, but on a larger scale, under the battlements of Stirling Castle. But what is there now called the King's Knot, is here named Arthur's Round Table. And, connected with a cave in the demesne of Brougham Castle in this neigh-

<sup>123</sup> See WHITE, *Northumberland and the Border*, p. 249 et seq. Compare also FERGUSSON, *Tree and Serpent Worship*, p. 32, n.

<sup>124</sup> MADDEN, *Romances of Syr Gawayne*, p. 309.

bourhood, we still find a tradition of a giant killed by the most famous knight of the Table Rounde, Sir Lancelot du Lac. Continuing our journey, we come on the Winster, which is another stream separating the counties of Cumberland and Westmoreland, and would appear to be the Gwensteri of the *Book of Taliessin*; <sup>125</sup> as the Derwent should seem to be the Derwennydd of the *Gododin Poems*. <sup>126</sup>

Here we have come to the south-western limit of what I venture to designate Arthurian Scotland. And now, turning northwards, again, I determined, if possible, to verify Sir F. Madden's conjecture that the Grene Chapel spoken of in the Scottish Romance of *Syr Gawayne and the Grene Knight* (by "Huchowne of the Awle Ryale" <sup>127</sup>?) is the same with the "Chapel of the Grene," which, in the older maps of Cumberland, is marked as existing on the point of land on the western coast, running into the estuary of the Wampool, not far from Skinburness. So from Silloth, which seems to be getting a favourite sea-bathing and health-recruiting place, I wandered up the Solway beach to the extreme point of Skinburness. And this much, at least, by way of verification of Sir F. Madden's conjecture, I may say, that there is near this a beautifully embayed shore, covered with the brightest green down to the very water's edge, from which, if, indeed, the site of the Chapel of the Grene, it might well have taken its name; and, further, that Volsty or Vulstey Castle, so long associated with the necromantic fame of the wizard Michael Scott, and which once stood in the fair wide plain which rises gradually to the foot of Skiddaw, might, from its site with reference to this bright green shore, the seaward border of the plain, well be that in which Sir Gawayne took up his abode, and which is stated to have been but two miles distant from the Grene Chapel, the object of his quest.

<sup>125</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 338, and v. II. p. 402.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.* v. I. p. 406, v. II. p. 449.

<sup>127</sup> MADDEN, *Romances of Syr Gawayne*.

Away, from here, over the sea, is the Castle of the King of Man—

“He lett him see a castle faire,  
Such a one he neuer saw yare,  
Noe wher in noe country.  
The Turke said to Sir Gawaine,  
‘Yonder dwells the King of Man,  
A heathen soldan is hee.’”<sup>128</sup>

And the Isle of Man, is the Mynaw of Taliessin ;<sup>129</sup> the Manau and Eubonia of Nennius.<sup>130</sup> May it possibly be also the Ermonie of the *Romance of Sir Tristrem*? Merlin, at any rate, is traditionally connected with the Isle of Man, as well as Gawayne. For, by Merlin the giants, who had overpowered the primitive population of Fairies, are in their turn said to have been overpowered, and spell-bound in subterranean chambers.<sup>131</sup>

A shower falling with the turn of the tide, I took shelter in a little cottage, where I found a pretty young woman with her first-born in her arms. Crowing, instead of crying, at sight of the stranger, I remarked what a fine big boy he was ; and his proud mother, turning her face modestly a little away, replied : “And yet they say that foresons are ordinarily sma’.” Looking from the cottage door, she pointed out to me where, on the opposite shore of the gleaming water, Annan might just be distinguished, and where, up the estuary of the Nith, lay Dumfries. And I was delighted with the beautiful lake-like Firth ; the charm of which, I imagined, must be mainly owing to the variety of its coast-outlines, and the undefined, mysterious recesses of its bays and estuaries ; though

<sup>128</sup> MADDEN, *Romances of Syr Gawayne*. See also *Bishop Percy's Folio MS.*, v. I. p. 95.

<sup>129</sup> PEARSON, *Historical Maps—Britannia Cambrica*.

<sup>130</sup> “Tres magnas insulas habet, quarum una vergit contra Armoricas, et vocatur Inisgueith ; secunda sita est in umbilico maris inter Hiberniam et Britanniam et vocatur nomen ejus Eubonia, id est Manau.” This name was also, as we have above seen, applied to a district in North Britain ; “regio qui vocatur Manau Guotodin.” It should seem that “the island was associated with the name of the Scots, and the region with that of the Picts.” *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 83.

<sup>131</sup> See WALDRON, *History and Description of the Isle of Man*.

there were also, indeed, the fine distant forms of the Scottish and English mountains, and the lights and shades of a bright, though beclouded summer's day.

Returning to Carlisle, thence crossing the Border, and turning along the northern shore of the Solway, the Galwudiæ Mare of Gildas,<sup>132</sup> we enter *District VI.—Galloway*; including under that name the western part of Dumfriesshire, Kirkcudbrightshire, and Wigtonshire. This district is mentioned in the poems of the Arthurian age as *Gallwyddel*, of which *Galgaidel* is the Gaelic, and *Galweithia* the Latin form, or equivalent,<sup>133</sup> and it may be described as lying between the Nith and Loch Ryan.<sup>134</sup> In the Mediæval romances, it is referred to as the patrimony of Sir Gawayne,<sup>135</sup> son of Loth, or Lothus, King of Lothian. And thus Galloway may be viewed also as the birthland of the many other knights of whom the only description is but such as this: "al they were of Scotland, outhur of Syr Gawaynes' kynne, outhur well-willers to his brethren."<sup>136</sup>

The localities, however, which we have to note in this, as also in the next district, belong rather to the Arthurian age than to King Arthur. But the first two I have to mention may be considered as exceptions to this rule, as they refer to S. Kentigern, whom so many traditions connect with Merlin. At Hoddam or Hodelem on the Annan, it is stated by Joceline<sup>137</sup> that this saint, on his recall from Wales, after the great Christian victory of Arderydd, placed, for a time, his episcopal seat. And some way higher up on the opposite side of the river is a church dedicated to him as S. Mungo. The whole of Nithsdale, and the country about Lochmaben appears in the *Book of Taliessin*, under the name of Mabon,<sup>138</sup> and Lochar Moss (near which we may visit the famous Caer-laverock Castle,

<sup>132</sup> *De Excid Brit.* c. xi.

<sup>133</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. II. p. 452, etc.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.* p. 401.

<sup>135</sup> MADDEN, *Romances of Syr Gawayne*.

<sup>136</sup> MALORY, *The Byrth, Lyf, and Actes of Kyng Arthur*.

<sup>137</sup> *Vita S. Kentigerni* in PINKERTON'S *Vitæ Antiquissimorum Sanctorum*.

<sup>138</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. pp. 363, 562 and v. II. pp. 420-6.

where Murdoch, second Duke of Albany, was for a time a prisoner in 1425), should seem to be the Man-Llachar of these poems.<sup>139</sup> Near Dumfries, with its tragical memories of the later years, and premature death, of Burns, we find on the north bank of the Cluden,—the Cludvein or Cledyfein of the poems,—where it falls into the Nith, the scene of the battle also commemorated in the *Book of Taliessin*, where

“lay the Peithwyr prostrate  
At the end of the wood of Celyddon.”<sup>140</sup>

For the author of the *Statistical Account* says, “The lower part of this parish was unquestionably at an early period a *quercetum*, or oak-forest, extending most probably to Snaid, a distance of eight miles.” It was termed the Holywood, and a monastery was afterwards founded here called “*Abbatia Sacri Nemoris*.” Not more than a quarter of a mile south-west of the church eleven large stones are placed in an oval form. They are situated near the lower end of the Sacred Grove; and should seem to be a record of this battle of Pencoed. The Peithwyr were no doubt the Picts of Galloway.<sup>141</sup> The Carron which flows into the Nith, in the upper part of its course, is probably the stream mentioned in the same *Ancient Book* as the “boundary of Garant.”<sup>142</sup> And the *Caer Rywc*, mentioned in another of these poems, “probably refers to Sanquhar or Senchaer, the old city which is on the Crawick, a name formed from *Caer Rawick* as *Cramond* is from *Caer Amond*.<sup>143</sup>

Journeying westward past the mediæval ruins of Sweetheart Abbey, of romantic fame, and Kirkcudbright, with its pre-mediæval memories of S. Cuthbert, we come to Wigton; and near this we find what would appear to be the tomb of that Gwallawg ap Lleenawg, relating to whom there is a whole class of poems in the *Four Ancient Books*.<sup>144</sup> For “in the highway between Wigton and Port-

<sup>139</sup> *Four Ancient Books*.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.* v. II. p. 402.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.* v. II. p. 401.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.* v. I. p. 338.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.* v. I. p. 429, and v. II. p. 407.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.* v. I. p. 336 *et seq.*

patrick about three miles westward of Wigton is a plaine called the Moor of the Standing Stones of Torhouse, in which there is a monument of three large whinstones, called King Galdus's Tomb, surrounded, at about twelve feet distance, with nineteen considerable great stones, but none of them so great as the three just mentioned, erected in a circumference."<sup>145</sup> And of Galdus, or Gallawg, Boece says "Elatum est corpus . . . . in vicino campi ut vivens mandaverat, est conditum ubi ornatissimum ei monumentum patrio more, immensis ex lapidibus est erectum;"<sup>146</sup> and he identifies him with Galgacus who fought against Agricola.<sup>147</sup> Leaving Whitehorn, or Candida Casa, with its memories of the apostolic S. Ninian, to the south, we journey on, passing Kirkcowan, with the query whether there is here to be found a topographical record of Gawayne, and come at length to the neighbourhood of Loch Ryan. Here there seems to be a record of the

"Battle in the Marsh of Terra, at the dawn,"<sup>148</sup>

in "four large unpolished stones placed erect and forming a circle. At a distance of some yards stands a single stone. They are called by the country people the 'Standing Stones of Glenterra.'" Near this, "about three feet deep in a peat moss, there is a regular pile of stepping-stones, extending about a quarter of a mile. These must have been placed in this position to form a passage through a

<sup>145</sup> SYMSON, *Description of Galloway* (1684).

<sup>146</sup> Quoted in *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 171.

<sup>147</sup> The antiquarian controversy about the Mons Grampius, and the site of the battle between Galgacus and Agricola is well known. See BURTON, *History of Scotland*, v. I. p. 12 et seq. But, if I am not deceived by the partiality of a grandson, a very probable case seems to be made out for that site on the Grampians in the neighbourhood of Stonehaven in Kincardineshire, where we find, on the plain, within a mile of the sea, a Roman Camp, and directly opposite, on the face of the hills, at the distance of not more than two miles, a native, or Caledonian entrenchment (Redykes). STUART (of Inchbreck), *Essays on Scottish Antiquities*, pp. 79-80 et seq. See also ROY, *Military Antiquities, Introduction*, p. iv.

<sup>148</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 338.

swamp previous to the growth of the peat moss.”<sup>149</sup> It remains but to add that *Caer Rheon*, now *Cairnryan*, *Llwch Rheon*, now *Loch Ryan*, and *Rhyd Rheon*, or *Ford of Ryan*, are all mentioned in these poems of the Arthurian Age;<sup>150</sup> and that the *Mull of Galloway* is the *Novant of Aneurin*.<sup>151</sup>

## SECTION (III).

*The Western Division of Arthurian Scotland.*

We now enter on *District VII.—Ayr*. And here we have first to note that the three immemorial divisions of this county—*Carrick*, *Kyle*, and *Cunningham*, all appear in the poems of the Arthurian Age under the more primitive Cymric forms of *Carrawg*, *Coel*, and *Canowan*. In the *Book of Taliessin*,<sup>152</sup> we find

“Of the many-cited Cymri, Carawg,  
The father of Caradawg.”

This *Caradawg* is obviously the *Caractacus* of *Boece*, who appears to have used local traditions whenever he could find them, and who says that in *Carrick* “erat civitas tum maxima a qua *Caractani* regio videtur nomen sortita. In ea *Caractacus* natus, nutritus, educatus.”<sup>153</sup> “And a similar monument to that we have found in *Galloway* to the memory of *Galdus*, is described in a MS. quoted by *Dr. Jamieson*, in his edition of *Bellenden’s Boece* as existing in *Carrick*. ‘There is 3 werey grate heapes of stonnes, callit wulgarley the *Kernes of Blackinney*, being the name of the village and ground. At the suthirmost of thir 3 cairnes are ther 13 great tall stonnes, standing upright in a perfyte cirkle, about some 3 elle ane distaunt from ane other, with a gret heighe stonne in the midle, which is

<sup>149</sup> *Statistical Account of Insh*, in the county of *Wigton*, quoted in *Four Ancient Books*, v. II. p. 402.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.* v. I. pp. 241, 276, v. II. pp. 337, 401.

<sup>151</sup> *PEARSON, Historical Maps—Britannia Cambria.*

<sup>152</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 429.

<sup>153</sup> Quoted, *Ibid.* v. I. p. 171.



werily esteemed be the most learned inhabitants to be the buriall place of King Caractacus.'"<sup>154</sup> In reference to this division of Ayr I have only to add that the Gafran of the poems would appear to be Girvan,<sup>155</sup> Caer Caradawg the Caractonium of Boece,<sup>156</sup> and Dunduff the Dindwydd of Aneurin.<sup>157</sup>

In the same poem, and a few lines after those last quoted, we find

"Who will pay the precious reward?

Or Coel, or Canowan?"<sup>158</sup>

Carrick, Kyle, and Cunningham thus mentioned together. And in those Verses of the Graves in the *Black Book of Caermarthen*, from which Mr. Arnold takes one of his illustrations of what he calls the *Pindarism* of the Celtic, as contrasted with the *Gemeinheit* of the Teutonic style,<sup>159</sup> we read

"Whose is the Grave on the slope of the hill?

Many who know it do not ask;

The Grave of Coel, the son of Cynvelyn."<sup>160</sup>

Boece tells us "Kyl dein proxima est vel Coil potius nominata, a Coilo Britannorum rege ibi in pugna cæso;"<sup>161</sup> and a circular mound at Coilsfield, in the parish of Tarbolton, on the highest point of which are two large stones, and in which sepulchral remains have been found, is pointed out by local tradition as his tomb.<sup>162</sup> The

<sup>154</sup> Quoted in *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 172.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid. v. II. p. 403.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid. v. II. 415.

<sup>157</sup> PEARSON, *Historical Maps—Britannia Cambria*.

<sup>158</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 430.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid. v. I. p. 316, Cynvelyn would become Cymbeline in English.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid. v. I. p. 170.

<sup>161</sup> *Study of Celtic Literature*, p. 145. The verse he quotes is as follows:

"The Grave of March is this, and this the Grave of Gwythyr;

Here is the grave of Gwgawn Gledyvrud;

But unknown is the Grave of Arthur."

Compare SKENE, *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 315.

<sup>162</sup> Whatever truth there may be in Mr. Fergusson's theory that the so-called Druidical Circles of Britain had nothing whatever to do with the Druids, but are sepulchral monuments of the Arthurian Age; it seems worth noting that in these Tombs of Gwallawg (Galdus) of Caradawg (Caractacus) and of Coel, we have monuments similar to those elsewhere called Druidical circles, but with traditions attached to them which seem to give support to such a theory as Mr. Fergusson's.

name of "Auld King Coil" is also perpetuated in the Craggs of Kyle, the burn of Coyl, and the parish of Coylton.

Coilsfield has fresher, and more romantic memories as the residence, in the humble capacity of a dairy-maid, of Burns' "Highland Mary." For Kyle is the Land of Burns; <sup>163</sup> as Carrick, we have just left, was the patrimony of Bruce, through the marriage of his father Robert Bruce, son of the Lord of Annandale, with the widowed Countess of Carrick. <sup>164</sup> And local traditions of both the national heroes,—Wallace as well as Bruce having been natives of this south-west part of Scotland,—may not a little have deepened the enthusiastic patriotism of the national poet. But we must proceed with our exploration of that Arthurian stratum of Romance which far underlies all those of mediæval and modern times.

The next locality we have to note is the promontory of Troon, which would appear <sup>165</sup> to be the site of the

"battle in the region of Bretrwyn,"

mentioned in the *Book of Taliessin*. <sup>166</sup> On Dondonald, "in cacumine montis qui appellatur Dundevenel," S. Monenna founded one of her churches after Arthur's victories over the pagan oppressors of his country. And Mr. Skene places his first battle "in ostium fluminis quod vocatur Glein," at the mouth of the river Glen, which rises in the mountains that separate Ayrshire from Lanarkshire, and

<sup>163</sup> It must, however, be noted that it was only the father of Burns who migrated to Ayrshire. His ancestors are traceable for three centuries as tenants of farms on the estate of Inchbreck, on the southern slope of the Grampians in Kincardineshire, a property that still belongs to the representative of the Stuarts of Castleton, etc., a branch of the family of the Earl of Castle-Stuart. See *infra*, note 208, p. cv\*.

<sup>164</sup> Bruce was thus "the representative of a Gaelic line of princes which had ruled over Galloway from time immemorial; whilst his paternal grandfather's mother, through whom he inherited his claim on the throne, was a daughter of the (Gaelic) royal house of Atholl." ROBERTSON, *Scotland under Her Early Kings*, v. II., p. 142 n. The representation of the family of the Bruce passed into that of the Stuarts (*infra*, p. cv\* n. 208); the Bruces, Earls of Elgin, being descended but from a knight of whom all that is known is that he was a cotemporary of the heroic king.

<sup>165</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. II. p. 402.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.* v. I. p. 337.

falls into the Irvine in the parish of Loudon. And it appears to Mr. Skene more probable that "Arthur advanced into Scotland on the West," just as in after days, Bruce, "through the friendly country peopled by the Cymry, than through Bernicia," where, as we have seen,<sup>167</sup> there is another river of this name, but "which was already occupied by large bodies of Angles."<sup>168</sup>

In Cunningham, the third division of Ayr, and which we have already noted as mentioned in the poems under the name of Canowan, was the

"battle in the wood of Beit at the close of the day,"

referred to by Taliessin.<sup>169</sup> And the place meant would appear to be the Moor of Beith in this district, where there was formerly a wood.<sup>170</sup> There should seem, however, to be no other locality of the Arthurian Age now discoverable here; so we may turn southwards again, and cross the mountains to the upper waters of the Clyde.

We now enter *District VIII.—Strathclyde*, "the region of the Clyd" of the *Red Book of Hergest*.<sup>171</sup> Upper Strathclyde would appear to be the Arfynydd of the Poems.<sup>172</sup> And here we may first note that, though, as we found, the Wells of the Tweed would not, the Sources of the Clyde, on the western slope of the same mountain-range would, very well accord with the twelfth century description of the Fountain of the Caledonian Merlin.<sup>173</sup> But if Merlin's Fountain is not clearly identifiable, we find, in the parish of Crawford, a well called Arthur's Fountain. That this name is of very ancient date we have evidence in a grant of "David de Lindesay, in 1339, to the monks of Newbotle of the lands of Brothralwyn in that district which were bounded

<sup>167</sup> *Supra*, p. lxxviii\*.

<sup>168</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 52. But see *infra*, p. cxxiv\*.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.* v. I. p. 337.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.* v. II. p. 402.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.* v. I. p. 463. See also p. 431, and v. II. p. 399.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.* v. II. p. 413.

<sup>173</sup> *Supra*, p. lxxiv\*.

on the west part, "a Fonte Arthuri usque ad summitate montis."<sup>174</sup> And other memories of Merlin are here recalled, for proceeding down the Clyde, we are in the ancient territory of his friend Rydderch Hael. For it is with this king of Strathclyde, not with Arthur, the Guledig, that the historical Merlin is associated. And in one of Merlin's poems relating to the Battle of Arderydd, preserved in the *Black Book of Caermarthen*, he seems to refer to Lanark, in its Cymric form *Llanerch*, a glade,<sup>175</sup> where in one of the apostrophes with which the stanzas of the poem commence, he exclaims—

"Sweet apple tree that grows in Lanark!

Sweet apple tree that grows by the river side!"<sup>176</sup>

Overhanging the brawling Avon, and on the skirt of the noble chase which, with its wild cattle and ancient oaks, is all that now remains of that Caledonian Forest, once haunted by Merlin, and which stretched from sea to sea, stands Cadzow Castle. It preserves the name of that district of Godeu, or "regina de Caidzow," as it is called in the life of S. Kentigern, which corresponded with what is now the middle ward of Lanarkshire,<sup>177</sup> and which is so often mentioned in the poems, and particularly in that called the Battle of Godeu:

"Minstrels were singing,  
Warrior bands were wondering,  
At the exaltation of the Brython,  
That Gwydyon effected."<sup>178</sup>

"This," says Mr. Skene, "was the alliance between the Brython, represented by Lleu (or Lothus) and the Gwyddel by Gwydyon which resulted in the insurrection of Medraut (or Mordred), son of Llew against Arthur, with his combined army of Picts, Britons, and Saxons, and which arose from a section of the Britons in the North

<sup>174</sup> *Chart. Newbattle*, N. 148, quoted by CHALMERS, *Caledonia*, v. I. p. 245. See also IRVING and MURRAY, *Upper Ward of Lanarkshire*.

<sup>175</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. II. p. 336.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.* v. I. p. 371-2.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.* II. p. 414.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.* v. I. p. 278.

being drawn over to apostasy by the pagan Saxons and semi-pagan Picts."<sup>179</sup>

Calderwood would appear to be the Calaterium Nemus of Geoffrey.<sup>180</sup> Cambuslang is the "regio Lintheamus," or Linthcamus, where S. Cadoc, to whom the parish is dedicated, built a monastery. And the adjoining parish of Carmunnock, formerly Carmannock, preserves the name of the mountain Bannawc—B, in combination, passing into M in Welsh,—mentioned in the life of S. Cadoc, and now called the Cathkin Hills. "Between Strathclyde and Ayrshire lay the district of Strathgryfe, now the county of Renfrew, and this part of Cumbria seems to have been the seat of the family of Caw, commonly called Caw Cawlwydd, or Caw Prydyn, one of whose sons was Gildas."<sup>181</sup> For in one of the lives of Gildas he is said to be the son of Caunus who reigned in Arecluta. . . . And this name signifies a district lying along the Clyde,"<sup>182</sup> as Strathgryfe or Renfrewshire does.<sup>183</sup> But in Neilston parish, in this county, we find more directly Arthurian localities in the places called Arthur Lee, Low Arthur Lee, and West Arthur Lee.

We conclude our exploration of Strathclyde with Glasgow. It appears in the *Book of Taliessin* as *Caer Clud*, the City on the Clyde.

". . . . they shall pledge the rich plains  
From *Caer Clud* to *Caer Caradawg*,  
The support of the land of *Penprys* and *Gwallawg*,  
The king of the kings of tranquil aspect."<sup>184</sup>

<sup>179</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 204.

<sup>180</sup> PEARSON, *Historical Maps—Britannia Cambrica*.

<sup>181</sup> Another, the Cueil, or Hueil, king of Scotland, "quem occidit rex Arthurus?"

<sup>182</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 173.

<sup>183</sup> It was in this county that the Normanno-Celtic family of the FitzAlans, who, from their hereditary office, took the name of Stewart, had their first grants of lands in Scotland. See SKENE, *History of the Highlanders*, v. II. p. 308 et seq.; and STUART (Hon. and Rev. Godfrey), *Genealogical and Historical Sketch of the Stuarts of the House of Castle-Stuart*. Paisley, the chief town of the county, was founded by Walter Stuart in 1160; and in its Abbey is the tomb of Marjory, daughter of Robert the Bruce, and mother of Robert the Second, the first of the Stuart dynasty.

<sup>184</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, p. 340.

And in a poem in the same Book, connected by its title with the legends of the sons of Llyr, the Lear of Shakspeare, and finely beginning with

“ I will adore the love-diffusing Lord of every kindred,  
The sovereign of hosts manifestly round the Universe,”

Glasgow appears under the name of Penryn Wleth :

“ From Penryn Wleth to Loch Reon  
The Cymry are of one mind, bold heroes.” <sup>185</sup>

For “Joceline describes Kentigern as proceeding from the Clyde, and sitting ‘super lapidem in supercilio montis vocabulo Gwleth’ (c. xiv.) *Gwleth*, forming in combination *Wleth*, signifies dew, and this hill was afterwards known as the Dew or Dowhill in Glasgow.” <sup>186</sup> But a better known memorial of the Arthurian founder of the city, three of whose miracles are commemorated on its arms, <sup>187</sup> is S. Mungo’s Well, in the crypt of the Cathedral.

We leave Glasgow for the exploration of *District IX.*—*Lennox*. That part of it to the east of Loch Lomond is identified by Mr. Skene with Murief or Reged. “The district intended by this name appears from a passage in the *Bruts*, where Arthur is said to have driven the Picts from Alclyde into “Mureif, a country which is otherwise termed Reged, and that they took refuge there in Loch Lomond. Loch Lomond was, therefore, in it, and it must have been the district on the North side of the Roman Wall or *Mur*, from which it was called *Mureif*.” <sup>188</sup> It is frequently mentioned in the poems ; in one, for instance, in the *Book of Taliessin*, beginning

“ Extol the career of the kings of Reged.” <sup>189</sup>

And among special localities in, or adjoining this district may be mentioned Mugdock, in Strathblane, which would appear to be the place meant by the latter of the two names in the line

“ Between Dineiddyn and Dineiddwg,” <sup>190</sup>

<sup>185</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 276.

<sup>187</sup> BURTON, *History of Scotland*, v. I. p. 249.

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.* p. 350.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.* v. II. p. 404.

<sup>188</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 59.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.* p. 270.

the former being clearly Edinburgh. It was certainly the scene of the great battle of 750 between the Britons of Strathclyde and the Picts at a place called by the Welsh chronicles Magedauc or Maesedauc.<sup>191</sup> And near this is Ardinny, the scene of the "battle of Ardunnion,"<sup>192</sup> referred to by Taliessin.

On the western brow of the Fintry Hills, we find that "Dun or Down of singular appearance,—its point a perpendicular rock fifty feet high," identified, as above,<sup>193</sup> with the "Height of Adoyn, from which the Bard of the second part of the *Gododin* saw the battle which he describes. And the Hills of Kilsyth, of which the old form was Kilvesyth, seem to be referred to in the 52nd stanza of the poem—

"Gododin, in respect of thee will I demand  
The dales beyond the ridges of *Drum Essyd*." <sup>194</sup>

Beyond this, along the north-eastern shores of Loch Lomond, Mr. Skene places Argoed Llwyfain.<sup>195</sup> Here Urien and Owen his son are described in a poem in the *Book of Taliessin* as fighting against Flamddwyn, or the Flamebearer—

"And because of the affair of Argoed Llwyfain,  
There was many a corpse.  
The ravens were red from the warring of men,  
And the common people hurried with the tidings." <sup>196</sup>

Dumbarton appears to be mentioned under the name of Nemhhur, or Nevtur, in a dialogue between Merlin and Taliessin in the *Black Book of Caermarthen*.<sup>197</sup> For this name occurs in the *Life of S. Patrick* by Fiech, written in the eighth century, after which it is unknown, and is identified by his scholiast with Dumbarton.<sup>198</sup> And Arthur's ninth battle, "in urbe Leogis qui Britannice Kairlium dicitur," is, by Mr. Skene, added to the innumerable conflicts which have been witnessed by this magnificent fortified rock, where the sword of Wallace is now preserved. For, as he says, "it seems unlikely that a battle could have been fought at this time with the Saxons at

<sup>191</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, p. 404.

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.* p. 337.

<sup>193</sup> *Suprd.* p. lxi\*.

<sup>194</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 693.

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.* v. II. p. 413.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.* v. I. p. 366.

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.* v. I. p. 368.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.* II. 321.

either Caerleon on the Esk, or Caerlon on the Dee, which is Chester; and these towns Nennius terms, in his list, not Kaerlium or Kaerlion, but Kaer Legion. It is more probably some town in the north, and the *Memorabilia* of Nennius will afford some indication of the town intended. The first of his *Memorabilia* is 'Stagnum Lumonoy,' or Loch Lomond; and he adds: 'non vadit ex eo ad mare nisi unum flumen quod vocatur *Leum*'—that is, the Leven. The Irish Nennius gives the name correctly, *Leamhuin*, and the Ballinmote text gives the name of the town, *Cathraig in Leomhan* (for *Leamhan*), the town on the Leven. This was Dumbarton, and the identification is confirmed by the *Bruts*, which place one of Arthur's battles at Alclyd; while his name has been preserved in a parliamentary record of David II. in 1367, which denominates Dumbarton 'Castrum Arthuri.'"<sup>199</sup> And it may be added that, according to tradition, it was the birthplace of Mordred, Arthur's nephew or bastard son.<sup>200</sup> Under the name of Alclyde, the city on the Clyde—a name as applicable to it as Kaer Leum, or Cathraig in Leomhan, for it is at the junction of the Leven with the Clyde,—Dumbarton is frequently mentioned in the *Four Ancient Books*:

"A battle in the ford of Alclud, a battle at the Inver."<sup>201</sup>

"A battle in the ford of Alclud, a battle in the Gwen."<sup>202</sup>

"There will come from Alclud, men, bold, faithful,  
To drive from Prydein bright armies."<sup>203</sup>

And on the Rock of Clyde, Petra Cloithe, another appropriate name for Dumbarton, "rex Rodarcus filius Totail regnavit," when, as recorded by Adomnan,<sup>204</sup> he sent a message to S. Columba, to ask him, as supposed to possess prophetic power, whether he should be slain by his enemies.

Lennox, Leven, and Lomond are all one word; and district, river,

<sup>199</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. pp. 55-6.

<sup>200</sup> CAMPBELL, *West Highland Tales*.

<sup>201</sup> *Four Ancient Books* I. 350.

<sup>203</sup> *Ibid.* I. 441.

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.* I. 363.

<sup>204</sup> *Life of S. Columba*.



and lake are all mentioned in the poems and old historical sources. The original word is, in its Cymric form, *Llwyfain*; in its Gaelic form, *Leamhain*, an elm-tree. From the latter comes *Leamhanach*, corrupted into Levenachs or Lennox, of which the Cymric equivalent is *Llwyfenydd*. But the old form of *Leamhan* of which Leven is a corruption, was *Leoman*, with the *m* not as yet aspirated; and from this comes Lomond. Thus we have the old form adhering to the loch and the mountain, while the river adopts the more modern.<sup>205</sup> In one of the poems in the *Four Ancient Books* the Lennox is mentioned as having been given to Taliessin in reward for his songs :

“ And a fair homestead,  
And beautiful clothing,  
To me has been extended,  
The lofty Llwyvenydd,  
And requests open.”<sup>206</sup>

Sailing up the Lago Maggiore of Scotland there comes, like a dark shadow, across our delight in the loveliness of its fairy islands, the memory of the tragic story connected with the ruins on the largest of them. For here it was that Isabel, Duchess of Albany lived after the death on the scaffold of her father, her husband, and her two sons,<sup>207</sup> in 1424. Yet most singular it is, that it is in her, and her husband's descendants, that is the representation of what is now the eldest legitimate male line of the Royal House of Stuart.<sup>208</sup> But proceeding on our voyage, and landing on the western shore of the Lake, about half way up, we find ourselves in Glen Douglas. Here Mr. Skene places Arthur's second third, fourth, and fifth battles

<sup>205</sup> Compare *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 159, and v. II. p. 413.

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.* v. I. 347.

<sup>207</sup> To Walter, the younger of the two, the beautiful and pathetic ballad of “Young Waters” is believed, on good ground, to refer.

<sup>208</sup> On the death of Prince Charles Edward without legitimate issue, the eldest son of Robert II. (James I.) was left without descendants in the male line. The representation, therefore, of the Royal Family of Stuart, as also of that of Bruce, fell to the Earl of Castle-Stuart, the representative in direct male descent of the Duke of Albany, the second son of Robert II., the first of the Dynasty. See STUART, (Hon.

“super aliud flumen quod dicitur Dubglas et est in regione Linnuis.” “Here,” says he, “Arthur must have penetrated the ‘regiones juxta murum,’ occupied by the Saxons. Dubglas is the name now called Douglas. There are many rivers and rivulets of this name in Scotland; but none could be said to be “in regione Linnuis,” except two rivers—the Upper and Lower Douglas which fall into Loch Lomond, the one through Glen Douglas, the other at Inveruglas, and which are both in the district of the Lennox, the Linnuis of Nennius. Here, no doubt, the great struggle took place; and the hill called Ben Arthur at the head of Loch Long, which towers over this district between the two rivers, perpetuates the name of Arthur in connection with it.”<sup>209</sup>

Here, on Ben Arthur, our Arthurian wanderings terminate; and here we may fitly review in their connection the localities we have identified as the sites of Arthur’s great battles. For, thus viewed, the probable correctness of each identification will, I think, become more apparent. “According to the view I have taken,” says Mr. Skene, “Arthur’s course was first to advance through the Cymric country, on the west, till he came to the Glen, where he encountered his opponents. He then invades the regions about the Wall, occupied by the Saxons in the Lennox, where he defeats them in four battles. He advances along the strath of the Carron as far as Dunipace, where, on the Bonny, his fifth battle is fought; and from thence marches south through Tweeddale, or the Wood of Celyddon, fighting a battle by the way, till he comes to the valley of the Gala, or Wedale, where he defeats the Saxons of the east coast. He then proceeds to take four great fortresses:

and Rev. Godfrey) *Genealogical and Historical Sketch of the Stuarts of the House of Castle-Stuart*. The connection of our present German sovereign with the ancient line of native English and Scottish kings is of a most remote, and collateral description. On personal conduct, and popular affection, not on “right divine,” is the throne now fortunately established.

<sup>209</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 53.

first, *Kaerlium* or Dumbarton; next, Stirling, by defeating the enemy in the *tratheu Tryweryd*, or Carse of Stirling; then *Mynydd Agned*, or Edinburgh, the great stronghold of the Picts, here called *Cathbregion*; and, lastly, Bouden Hill, in the centre of the country between these strongholds." Twenty-one years after, is fought at Camelon the battle of Camlan, in which both Arthur and Med-rant perished." Mr. Skene concludes with the judicious remark, that "in thus endeavouring to identify the localities of those events connected with the names of Cunedda and of Arthur, I do not mean to say that it is all to be accepted as literal history, but as a legendary account of events which had assumed that shape as early as the seventh century, when the text of the *Historia Britonum* was first put together, and which are commemorated in local tradition."<sup>210</sup>

Such, then, is the verification of the theory, deduced from the criticism of Cymric history, which is afforded by an exploration of the topography of Southern Scotland and the English Border. In the first place, we find in the Lennox, on the Firth of Forth, and in Tweeddale, sites for all the great battles of the Arthur of History, highly probable, to say the least, both considered separately, and in their sequence. This only I would remark on Mr. Skene's theory as just stated, that, as it seems to me improbable that Arthur had Saxon foes so far west as the Lennox, I would, on this ground, be inclined to prefer the sites given by the writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, as those of his first, and next four battles. But whether we accept Mr. Skene's theory in its entirety, or thus modified, the fact remains that very probable sites may be found for all Arthur's battles, not only in Arthurian Scotland, but just in those districts of it which we know to have formed a debateable land between Cymry, Saxons, and

<sup>210</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. pp. 58 and 60.

Picts during the Arthurian Age. And further, it is to be remarked that at, or in the near neighbourhood of every one of these battle-sites thus identified, we find existing, from the time of our oldest charters, and other documents, to this day, places with Arthur's name, or traditions of Arthur's history. Not far from the Glen, we have Arthur's Lee, etc. ; towering over the battle-fields on the Douglas, Ben Arthur ; near the battlefield of Dunnipais (Bassas), as also near that of the final battle of Camlan, Arthur's O'on ; near the fields of battle of the Wood of Celyddon, and of Wedale, the Eildon Hills with their traditions of the departing out of this world of all the Arthurian Chivalry, and of the coming again of King Arthur ; Dumbarton, where, as above, his ninth battle was fought, bears his name as Arthur's Castle ; near the scene, according to Mr. Skene, of his tenth battle, we find Arthur's Round Table ; near that of his eleventh battle, Arthur's Seat ; and near his twelfth battle-field, the tradition I have above given of Cockleroy Hill. And not only are these battle-sites in the neighbourhood of traditional localities, but what is, perhaps, an equally important confirmation of the correctness of these identifications, they are in the neighbourhood of the great Roman roads.<sup>211</sup> We find also, from the foregoing exploration, that the Arthurian Traditions of the various districts, in which so many historical and poetical sites of the Arthurian Age have been identified, are not only distinctively different in each district, but that, in such difference, these traditions are in singular accordance with historical facts. In Strathmore, we have the tradition of Guenivere carried off by the Pictish Mordred ; and the fact of the country beyond the Forth having been in the possession of the Picts. Lothian and Galloway we find connected by traditions of Lothus and his son Gawayne ; and

<sup>211</sup> Compare ROY, *Military Antiquities*. One is the more struck on observing this, as Mr. Skene's identifications seem to have been made without any reference to these roads.

we know as a fact that, though separated by a wide extent of Cymric territory, these two districts were inhabited by the same Pictish race. Cumberland is distinguished by traditions of the Court of King Arthur, of which Gawayne, who is particularly mentioned as "of Scotland," "de l'Escosse," in the French Romances, is the principal hero; and Cumberland marched with his patrimony of Galloway. The Isle of Man is spoken of as inhabited by a foreign and hostile race; and it was in fact inhabited, not as the mainland by Cymry, but by Irish Scots. And so on. I do not, indeed, know of any tradition of Arthurian Scotland which, in its general features at least, is not in accordance with the results of our later historical researches.

This accordance between topographical tradition and historical fact will be further illustrated in the following chapter, in which the results will briefly be given of the later investigation of that Ossianic poetry and Fingalian tradition, which, as pointed out in Chapter II. Section (II), would have been a condition inimical to the importation into the North of Arthurian tradition, if it had elsewhere had its birthland. And, as a still further confirmation of the theory of this Essay, I shall, in the concluding chapter, more particularly show that all the chief incidents of the Arthurian Romances find in Scotland fit traditional localities, and that with "the North" are also connected all the chief characters of these Romances, with the exception, perhaps, of Sir Tristrem. From the list given in the Appendix, of Scottish Arthurian Localities, Traditional, Historical, and Poetical—a List which gives in a summary form the results of the exploration above narrated—I trust that the chief country of these localities will appear, without question, to be "the North;" and that, in this general fact, and those to which I have, in the foregoing remarks, more particularly called attention, there will be admitted to be an important inductive verification of our deductive theory that the birthland of the Traditions of King Arthur was Arthurian Scotland.

## CHAPTER IV.

THE FINGALIAN RELATIONS OF ARTHURIAN LOCALITIES AS PRESENTED  
BY AN EXAMINATION OF PICTISH MEMORIALS.

THUS I have shewn, first, that the critical results of the examination of Cymric history, political and literary, point to what is now Southern Scotland and the English Border, as the scene of the events which were the historical bases of the Arthurian traditions; and, secondly, that the theory deduced from this historical and literary criticism has what may be justly regarded as an inductive verification in the results of the journeying narrated in the foregoing pages. And I would now proceed to point out those Fingalian relations of the Arthurian topography of Scotland which are presented by an examination of Pictish Memorials. I shall show that, as the traditions of Arthur and Merlin are what still lives for us of the Cymry of the south, the traditions of Fingal and Ossian are the still living memorials of the Picts of the north of Scotland; that Scotland beyond the northern boundary of what the localities just pointed-out suggest that we should call Arthurian Scotland, should, if it is to be similarly named from its traditional topography, be distinguished as Fingalian; and that the Cymry and Picts to whom the Arthurian and Fingalian cycles of Celtic Mythology respectively belong, were of kindred Celtic race and language, and in geographical relations to each other in Scotland similar to those which are now found to exist between the Arthurian and Fingalian topographies of that country.

## SECTION (I).

*The Relation of the Feinne to the Picts.*

I have first, then, to show that the Fingalian traditions would appear to connect themselves with the Picts of the north, in the

same manner as the Arthurian traditions are certainly derived, whether originally or not, from the Cymry of the south of Scotland. For the question as to the real position of the Ossianic poems in the literature of Scotland depends, as Mr. Skene has pointed out, on the answer to the preliminary question : "Who were the Feinne, the Fenians, or Fingalians of tradition, and to what country and period are they to be assigned?"<sup>1</sup> And his investigation of this question ends in the conclusion that, whether a denomination for an entire people, or for a body of warriors, the Feinne belonged to the Cruithne, or Picts, the race prior to the Low Germans in Lochlin, or Scandinavia, and the seaboard north of the Rhine, and to the Scots in Alban, or northern Scotland, Breatan, or southern Scotland, and Erin, or Ireland. Hence, the Ossianic poems, and Fingalian traditions, appear as celebrating Pictish heroes, and recording, in a legendary form, events of early Pictish history. And hence, the Feinne, or Fenians, and the traditions which form the groundwork, at least, of the Ossianic poems, "belong to that period in the history of Scotland and Ireland before a political separation had taken place between them, when they were viewed as parts of one territory, though physically separated, and when a free, and uninterrupted intercourse took place between them." As to how the Scottish Gaelic, in which these Fingalian traditions and poems have been transmitted, originated in the undalriadic parts of the Highlands; Mr. Skene remarks that, "if the supposition be correct that the Cruithne, or Picts, spoke a Gaelic dialect, we can easily understand how, though originally different from the Gaelic dialect of Dalriada, it may, by the influence of the written language, and its vernacular use by the clergy for so long a period, have become modified, and assimilated to it."

Whether the historical events in which the Fingalian traditions originated, occurred in Alban or Erin, on the eastern, or on the

<sup>1</sup> *Book of the Dean of Lismore*, p. lxiv.

western side of the narrow seas dividing the ancient Pictland of the centuries preceding the sixth, is, I would submit, a question which can be scientifically determined only by following some such method as that I have stated, and exemplified, in this attempt to discover the original birthland of the Arthurian traditions. First, there must be deduced from the criticism of the earliest historical sources, the time, character, and place of the events which may have been the actual bases of these traditions; and secondly, this deduction must be verified by the results of a thorough study of the Fingalian topography, both of Scotland and of Ireland; the assumption being that, where there is the greatest number of Fingalian localities, there the events occurred in which Fingalian traditions originated, except such abundance of local tradition can be otherwise more probably explained.

That, however, the Scots under whom the various Celtic and Teutonic races of North Britain are found, at the opening of the Mediæval age, consolidated into one predominantly Celtic nationality, were Irish immigrants who settled in what is now Argyllshire, in the sixth century, would appear to be certain; and that these Irish Scots belonged originally to a southern stream of migration by Syria, Africa, and Spain, from the Asian cradle of the Aryan race, would appear to be not improbable. But on the other hand, the Picts, or Cruithne,—with whom the Fenian legends and Ossianic poetry are by so many indications, if not positive proofs, connected,—would appear to have originally belonged to a northern stream of migration, by Scythia and Germany, or Lochlin. And hence, as, for the Scots of Albany or North Britain, Erin or Ireland was the parent country; so, for the Picts of Erin, Albany would be the colonising fatherland. We know, at least, as historical facts, that, as the Scots of Albany became independent of those of Erin in 573, the Picts of Erin threw off the yoke of those of Albany in 608.<sup>2</sup> And the infer-

<sup>2</sup> See SKENE, *Chronicles of the Picts and Scots*.



ence should seem to be that it is that country which was the fatherland of the race, with heroes of which Ossianic poetry seems to be chiefly conversant, that can best claim an original character for its Fingalian traditions and topography. The question at least suggests itself, whether, in like manner, as, though all the MSS. of ancient Cymric literature are Welsh, yet the original localities of its Arthurian poems would seem to be found in Southern Scotland; so, though the greater part of the MSS. of ancient Gaelic literature are Irish, yet the original localities of its Fingalian traditions may not be found in Western (and Northern) Scotland, rather than in Ireland?

But whether the historical bases of the Fingalian traditions were events which actually occurred in the third, or some later, century; whether the scene of these events was Albain, or Erin, or both; and whether, therefore, it is Scotland, or Ireland, or neither exclusively, that was the birthland of the Fingalian traditions; must, for the present, be left as questions to which no definitive answer can be given. Certain, however, it is that Scotland has not only an equal claim with Ireland to an Ossianic poetry<sup>3</sup> in which Fingalian heroes have been "celebrated in Gaelic verse ever since the ninth century, if not the seventh;"<sup>4</sup> but that Scotland alone can lay claim to what I would call the Fingalian Epic, the Gaelic "Ossian," published from MacPherson's MSS. in 1807 as the original of his translation of 1762. And this epicising of old Ossianic fragments, for such the Gaelic "Ossian" has now been shown to be, must be at least admitted to be a work of very great historical importance.

<sup>3</sup> In answer to Professor O'Curry's somewhat hasty remark—"Of all MacPherson's translations, in no single instance has a genuine *Scottish* original been found, and that none *will* ever be found I am very certain" (*MS. Materials of Ancient Irish History*, p. 304)—it seems here sufficient to refer to Skene's Introduction to the *Book of the Dean of Lismore*, to the fourth volume of Campbell's *West Highland Tales*, and to the collection of Gaelic MSS. (65 in 1862), mainly formed by Mr. Skene, and deposited in the Library of the Faculty of Advocates.

<sup>4</sup> CAMPBELL, *Tales of the West Highlands*, v. IV., p. 249.

As to its literary merit, "when I read *Fingal* in the original," says one of the most competent of judges, "I feel that this is poetry, that these are grand ideas clothed in magnificent sonorous language ; on reading it in English, I often feel that there is something in it akin to bombast. . . . . I have no doubt that the work is founded on genuine old popular materials, and I would rank it for originality with Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, or *Homer*, if the Greek poems were floating ballads before they were made into epic poems."<sup>5</sup> And our most fastidious English critic thus writes: "Its chord of penetrating passion and melancholy, its *Titanism* as we see it in Byron,<sup>6</sup> what other European poetry possesses that like the English, and where do we get it from? The Celts . . . are the prime authors of this vein of piercing regret and passion, of this *Titanism* in poetry. A famous book, Macpherson's *Ossian*, carried in the last century this vein like a flood of lava through Europe. . . . Make the part of what is forged, modern, tawdry, spurious, in the book as large as you please . . . there will still be left a residue with the very soul of the Celtic genius in it, and which has the proud distinction of having brought this soul of the Celtic genius into contact with the genius of the nations of modern Europe, and enriched all our poetry by it. Woody Morven, and echoing Lora, and Selma with its silent halls!—we all owe them a debt of gratitude, and when we are unjust enough to forget it, may the Muse forget us!"<sup>7</sup>

With respect to the authorship of the Fingalian Epic, Mr. Campbell's "theory is, that about the beginning of the eighteenth century, or the end of the seventeenth, or earlier, Highland bards may have fused floating popular traditions into more complete forms, engrafting their own ideas on what they found ; and that MacPherson

<sup>5</sup> CAMPBELL, *Tales of the West Highlands*, v. IV. p. 155 and p. 249.

<sup>6</sup> On his mother's side, as will be remembered, a Scottish Gordon, and known in his boyhood at Aberdeen as Byron-Gordon.

<sup>7</sup> ARNOLD, *On the Study of Celtic Literature*, pp. 152-3.

found their works, translated and altered them, published the translation in 1760; made the Gaelic ready for the press; published some of it in 1763; and made away with the evidence of what he had done when he found that his conduct was blamed . . . . But till an earlier author is discovered, if such there was, MacPherson's name must be associated with his publication. And that must rank as a Scoto-Gaelic work at least a hundred years old, and till the contrary is proved, Ireland has not a ghost of a claim to it.<sup>8</sup>

As to MacPherson's personal character, it may not, under all the circumstances of the case, be going too far aside from our present subject to add that, though he would have had a far more desirable fame, had he "had the courage to avow the truth, and state candidly to the world how much of his work was based on original authority, and to what extent he had carried the process of adapting, interpolating, and weaving into epic poems;"<sup>9</sup> yet, in mitigation of our judgment, it is but fair to remember that, in his time, there was not yet that scrupulous truthfulness in antiquarian research which, but a manifestation as it is of the general increase of the scientific spirit, is characteristic of these days; and further, that the outrageous violence of the attacks led by the prejudiced, overbearing, and in this matter, utterly ignorant Saxon, Dr. Johnson,<sup>10</sup> was not calculated to encourage a candour which would have been certainly represented as a confession of forgery. Let us now, however,

<sup>8</sup> CAMPBELL, *West Highland Tales*, v. II. p. 80 and p. 249.

<sup>9</sup> SKENE, *Book of the Dean of Lismore*, Introduction, p. lii.

<sup>10</sup> "Here lies poor Johnson: readers have a care,  
Tread lightly, lest you rouse a sleeping bear;—  
Religious, moral, generous, and humane,  
He was,—but self-sufficient, rude, and vain;  
Illbred, and overbearing in dispute,  
A Scholar, and a Christian, yet a Brute.  
Would you know all his wisdom, and his folly,  
His actions, sayings, mirth, and melancholy;  
Boswell, and Thrall, retailers of his wit,  
Will tell you how he wrote, and talked, and coughed, and spit."

forget him as the unenviable hero of the Ossian controversy, and think rather of MacPherson, whether he was, or not, in his Gaelic *Fingal*, the first to epicise the Fenian ballads, and tales of his country, yet as, in his English *Fingal*, the most considerable Scottish poet immediately preceding Burns and Scott;<sup>11</sup> as the Gaelic critic to whom all scholars are indebted as having been the first to waken that wide interest in Celtic researches which has already produced so much fruit;<sup>12</sup> and as the original genius from whom is to be dated that Celtic Revival which has already influenced, and is manifestly destined still further to influence, the political and social condition of Britain, and the literature of Europe.<sup>13</sup>

To sum up these remarks. We find that Scotland has, besides its Arthurian traditions, an Ossianic literature which has, through MacPherson, exercised a most important European influence; that this literature is founded on Fenian or Fingalian legends which are still current as popular tales in the West Highlands; that the Feinne, who are the heroes of these legends, belonged to the race of the Picts; that, as Scotland was the fatherland of the Picts who

<sup>11</sup> Mr. Skene speaks of "the wonderful tact and originality Macpherson really showed in producing his English version." *Book of Dean of Lismore*, p. liii. And Mr. Burton does not hesitate to say that "he brought to his work the true power of a great poet." *History of Scotland*, v. I. p. 179.

<sup>12</sup> It was the Ossian controversy that first drew attention to the ancient Welsh and Irish poems.

<sup>13</sup> "En présence des progrès . . . . qui n'est d'aucun pays, et ne peut recevoir d'autre nom que celui de moderne ou européenne, il serait puéril d'espérer que la race Celtique arrive dans l'avenir à une expression isolée de son originalité. Et pourtant nous sommes loin de croire que cette race ait dit son dernier mot. Après avoir usé toutes les chevaleries dévotées et mondaines, . . . . qui sait ce qu'elle produirait dans le domaine de l'intelligence, si elle s'enhardissait à faire son entrée dans le monde, et si elle assujettissait aux conditions de la pensée moderne sa riche et profonde nature? Il me semble que de cette combinaison sortiraient des produits fort originaux, une manière fine et discrète de prendre la vie, un mélange singulier de force et de faiblesse, de rudesse et de douceur . . . . On se persuade qu'il est téméraire, de poser une loi aux intermittences et au réveil des races, et que la civilisation moderne, qui semblait faite pour les absorber, ne serait peut-être que leur commun épanouissement."—RENAN, *La Poesie des Races Celtiques* in *Essais de Morale et de Critique*, pp. 454-6.

spread into Ireland, just as Ireland was the fatherland of the Scots who spread into Scotland, and gave it their name, it should seem not improbable that Scotland was the birthland of Fingalian, as well as of Arthurian tradition; and, finally, I would now add that the fact that the author of the Fingalian Epic was a Badenoch-man, was a native, therefore, of that Pictish province of Moray, or Moravin, which so long withstood the power of the Scottish kings, and belonged to the great clan Chattan, a tribe chiefly of Pictish origin,<sup>14</sup> is not a little interesting and remarkable with reference to the relation of the Feinne to the Picts.

## SECTION (II).

*The Relation of Fingalian to Arthurian Topography.*

I have now to show that Scotland north and west of the line of the Grampians is as distinctively Fingalian in its topography, as, south and east of that line, we have found it to be Arthurian. To attempt to give anything like a complete list of the Fenian localities of Scotland would be here irrelevant. It will be sufficient for my present purpose to show that they are found more or less thickly over the whole of Scotland beyond that part of it which is distinguished by an Arthurian topography; and further, that these Fingalian localities are not found within, though some of them are on the outskirts of, the Arthurian country. Let me, then, imagine those who have accompanied me in my Arthurian journey to continue their wanderings into Fingalian Scotland.

Sailing down Loch Lomond, we find overlooking the islands at its southern end, a hill called Dun Fion, or the Fort of Fingal. Thence, through the Lennox by Glen Fruin, the "Glen of Sorrow,"

<sup>14</sup> SKENE, *History of the Highlanders*. Compare v. I. chap. IV. and v. II. chap. VI. The MacPhersons seem to have been the Clan Yha, or Clan Kay, and the MacIntoshes the Clan Quhele, whose conflict on the North Inch of Perth in 1396 is introduced with such effect in Sir Walter Scott's *Fair Maid of Perth*.

where, in the time of James VI., the MacGregors and the Colquhouns met for the high purpose of mutual slaughter—tragic, and yet, from a certain point of view, grimly humorous spectacle! Then, across Loch Long, up Loch Goil, and so, by Hell's Glen, to Inverary on Loch Fyne. Here one might enumerate in one view a long list of Fingalian localities; Cruach-Fhinn, Innis-Chonain, Innis Aildhe, Innis Raoinne, Innis Chonnail, etc. Crossing again into Cowall we find it "still brimful of Fenian traditions." And here, particularly, we come on the first of those localities so tenderly commemorated in the Lament of Deirdre over Alban, which is the foundation of MacPherson's "Darthula," and of which there is a copy in the Glenmasan MS. of the year 1238, now in the Advocates' Library.

"Glendaruadh! O Glendaruadh!  
My love each man of its inheritance,  
Sweet the voice of the cuckoo on bending bough,  
On the hill above Glendaruadh,"<sup>15</sup>

Thence, sailing down the Kyles of Bute, and crossing the southern end of Loch Fyne to Tarbert, we observe, in the distance, the beautiful island of Arran, Ar-ain, or Ar-fhinn, Fin's Land, where there is another Dun Fion. Exploring the neighbourhood of West Loch Tarbert we remark that it is especially distinguished by its traditions of Diarmid, the Lancelot of Arthurian Romance, and Mordred of Arthurian Tradition. Here we find Leaba Dhiarmaid, "the Bed of Diarmid;" Leum na Muice, "the Swine's Leap;" Tor na Tuirc, "the Boar's Heap," where the boar was killed by Diarmid; and Sliabh Ghavil, "the Hill of Love," to which the wounded hero is said to have addressed, as he was dying, lines still preserved by tradition. Near this also, is Dun 'a Choin Duibh, "the Fort of the Black Dog," which is a curious old fort in a wood, and is said to be the place where Bran killed the black dog, as is told in a well known ballad. Wandering up Knapdale we find, on Loch Swine

<sup>15</sup> *Book of the Dean of Lismore*, p. xxxv.

the Dun Suibhne of ballad and song. A short distance to the north, we find the site of the ancient capital of the Scottish kingdom of Dalriada, the hill fort of Dunadd, called also from its situation in the centre of the Moss of Crinan, Dunmonaidh, or "the Fort of the Moss." And thence, getting to Loch Awe, we find its shores and islands, as romantic in Fingalian legend as in natural scenery;<sup>16</sup> Innis Fraoch, particularly, recalling a legend wonderfully similar to that of Hercules and the garden of the Hesperides. The story is finely told by an ancient bard in a composition usually called "Bàs Fraoich," or *The Death of Fraoch*, and beginning:

"The sigh of a friend from Fraoch's green mound,  
'Tis the warrior's sigh from his lonely bier,  
'Tis a sigh might grieve the manly heart,  
And might make the maid to weep."<sup>17</sup>

Wandering on, through the Pass of Brander, at the foot of Ben Cruachan, we come down on Loch Etive, the Loch Eitche of the Lament of Deirdre, and the Lora of the Fingalian Epic. At its southern end is Dunstaffnage Castle, more properly Dun-da-innis from two islands near it,—the Dun Lora of Ossian. The Ferry—over the rocks of which the ebb-tide thunders with deafening roar—is the Falls, and the moor on the other side is the Heath, of Lora with its dark gray stones,—the Eas Laoire, and Sliabh Eas Laoire of MacPherson's Gaelic *Fingal*. Not far from this also is the Luath, another of Ossian's streams. And Dun mhiac Uisneachan, now corruptly called in guidebooks, Dun MacSniachan, and also named Bail-an-righ, "the King's house or town," seems with great probability identified with the Selma and Taura of Ossian, and with the Beregonium of ancient writers. Of the same Pictish, and Fingalian Uisneach, we have another record near this in Glen Uisneach. And it is to be noted that the legends of his three sons, Ainle, Ardun, and Naoise, connect them with those remarkable structures termed

<sup>16</sup> See the notes to HAMERTON'S *Loch Awe and other Poems*.

<sup>17</sup> *Book of the Dean of Lismore*, p. 54 and p. 36.

vitified forts, of which Dun mhic Uisneach is one, and Dun Dhear-dhuil, and Dun Scathaig are other examples.

Proceeding to Oban, we may take the steamer round Mull to the sacred, but tourist-profaned Iona,<sup>18</sup> and to that sublime sea-cave which bears the name of Fingal. Returning through the Sound of Mull, we have on our left the Morvern, so often mentioned in the Fingalian Epic, but unknown in the Fingalian ballads and tales. In the island of Liosmor, or Lismore, however, which gave its name to the deanery of that Sir James MacGregor who, in the sixteenth century, made the valuable collection, recently edited, of Gaelic poetry, *then* ancient, we have more genuine Fingalian localities. Larach tigh nam Fiann, "the Site of the Fingalians' House," is a large circular mound of some eighty yards diameter, surrounded by a ditch, and having near its centre a deep well which may have been used for the purpose of entrapping game in this traditionally favourite hunting ground of the Fingalians. And in pleasant conjunction with these memorials of the chase is here also found Sliabh nam Ban Fionn, "the Fingalian Fair Women's Hill." Coasting the shores of Appin, and sailing up another of the many Lakes of Elms (Loch Leven), we land at Ballachulish, and thence walk to Glen Coe (Gleann Comhan), "the Narrow Glen." Here tradition fitly places the birth-place of Ossian, "the sweet voice of Cona;" and among the sublime precipices that wall the Glen on the east is Ossian's Cave.

Journeying up the Glen, to where it opens on the Moor of Rannoch, and turning down next day through the Black Mount Forest, we come to Glen Orchy, another of the localities of the Lament of Deirdre. Thence, through Glen Dochart, to Cill Fhinn, pronounced in Gaelic, and written in English Killin, "Fingal's Tomb." And in the neighbourhood we find a place called Sornach-coir-

<sup>18</sup> This island is the property of the Duke of Argyll; and one can hardly believe that his Grace, so eminent as he is for wide culture and high feeling, can be aware of the neglected and unguarded state in which the most ancient monuments of the Scottish monarchy are here going to ruin. I speak from the impressions of a visit in 1866.



Fhinn, "Fingal's Oven." Proceeding up Loch Tay, we come to the Kirkton of Fortingall, anciently the Clachan of Fothergill, where was born that Dean of Lismore, to whose MS. of the sixteenth century we are so much indebted. To the West of this is Glen Lyon, the ancient Cromgleann nan Clach, or "Crooked Glen of the Stones," associated with so many traditions of the Feinne, and where the remains of their rude forts, termed Caistealan na Feinne, crown many a rocky summit. And the vale is bounded on the south and east by the heights of Drum Fhionn, or "Fingal's Ridge." Turning again southwards, "in that awful part of Glen Almon where lofty and impending cliffs on either hand make a solemn, and almost perpetual gloom,"<sup>19</sup> is found Clachan Ossian, "the grave-stone of Ossian;" and one of the neighbouring hills is called Monivaird, or "the Bard's Hill." About three miles from Clach Ossian in a glen named Corriviarlich is Fingal's Cave; and on the other side of the Almon in Strathearn, is a small village named Fendoch, anciently Fianntach, "Fingal's Thatch-house or Hall," where, according to the tradition, the king came to reside after the Bail-an-Righ above mentioned had been burned down by Garbh MacStairn.

In the Aberdeenshire Highlands, I may note, among other localities, Bengulbain in Glen Shee, with its tradition of the famous boarhunt of Diarmid O'Dune—

"Then bravely did the hero of the Feinn  
Rouse from his cover on the mountain-side,  
The great old boar, him so well known in Shee,  
The greatest in the wild-boar's haunt e'er seen."<sup>20</sup>

Ben-Muich-Dhui is "the Hill of the Black Sow." And on the north side of the upper valley of the Dee, in the Forest of Glen Avon, and overlooking Inchrory, is Clach Bhean, "the Hill of the Woman's Stone," with its legend of Fingal's wife, Grainne, the "victim," (?) of Diarmid. Crossing the mountains here alone, early one October,

<sup>19</sup> *Poems of Ossian* (Highland Society's Edition), v. III. p. 534.

<sup>20</sup> *Book of the Dean of Lismore*, p. 32 and p. 22.

night fell, dark and starless, when I was still but a short way below the sources of the Don; and I should have been lost in the snow, but that a herd of red deer started-up from their snowy lairs, as I came floundering in among them in the darkness, and, as they rushed away, set a kennel of hounds, at a distance, baying in the still night. I marked the direction of the welcome sound; and fording the river, made straight to where it seemed to come from.

In Moray, which so long remained Pictish, is a place called Tuber na Fein, which in an old gloss to a charter of Alexander II., of the year 1220, still preserved in the chartulary of the Bishopric, is explained to mean "the Well of the Great or Kempis Men." Loch Ness, near which was the Pictish capital, should seem to be named after Naoise, the son of Uisneach, above mentioned. In Ross-shire, there is Gleann Chonnain "Connan's vale;" and Amhain Chonnain, "Connan's river;" and even Gleann Bhraim, in honour of Fingal's celebrated dog, Bran. Returning southward, we find, to the south of Loch Ness, and in Glen Roy, other Ben Gulbains, with their traditions of

"The blue-eyed hawk that dwelt at Essaroy,"<sup>21</sup>

which also is in this district. And travelling westward, as we bring these wanderings to a close, we find in Glen Elg, or Gleann Eilig, "the Glen of the Elk," a place called Iomaire-nam-fearmor, "the Big Men's Ridge," where tradition says that two of the Fingalians, who were drowned in crossing Caol-reathain, are buried. Crossing to Skye, we come into the country of Cuchullin, whom tradition connects with Dun Scathaig, another of those so-called vitrified forts. And now, looking out on the Atlantic, we may behold such sea-pictures as that so graphically described in the five words of the ancient line—

"Sgaoth eunlaith air steuda saile"

A skiff of birds on steeds of brine.

"As each long Atlantic wave comes rolling in, we may see a clump

<sup>21</sup> *Book of the Dean of Lismore*, p. 33.

of dark razor-bills rise on the crest, and sink into the hollow trough . . . . riding like skiffs at anchor till fishing time comes, and then they are up and off, to ride their steeds to battle with the herring king." <sup>22</sup>

## SECTION (III).

*The Relation of the Picts to the Cymry.*

Having thus briefly indicated the relations of the Feinne to the Picts, and of the Fingalian to the Arthurian topography of Scotland, we have now to point out the relations of the Picts to the Cymry in race, language, and geographical position. From the evidence of writers cotemporaneous with their existence as a known and distinct people; from the analysis of such remains of their language as have come down to us; and from the inference to be drawn from the topography of the districts which they are known to have occupied; Mr. Skene arrives at the conclusion that the Picts were of the Gadhaelic branch of the Celtic race; but that their language was, to use the nomenclature by which Grimm distinguishes the leading differences of the German dialects, a low Gadhaelic, and hence approached in many of its forms to the low Cymric of the Welsh; Cornish, and Armorican, or Breton, representing the high Cymric dialects; as the Gaelic, the Irish, and the Manx, represent the high Gadhaelic dialects.

And in opposition to the popular view of the demarcation between a Cymric and a Gadhaelic population supposed to be indicated by the occurrence of the words *aber* and *inver*, Mr. Skene shows that there were three words, *aber*, *inver*, and *conber*, expressive of the junction of one stream with another, and all formed from the old Celtic word *ber*, signifying water; and that what we actually find is, the Scots of the west with nothing but *invers*, the Picts of the north with *abers* and *invers* together, and the

<sup>22</sup> CAMPBELL, *West Highland Tales*, v. IV., pp. 158-9.

Cymry south of the Forth and Clyde with no *abers*.<sup>23</sup> Such, as far as can be ascertained, should seem to have been the relations of the Picts in race, and language, to the Cymry.<sup>24</sup> And if this conclusion is still not free of doubt, it would now appear to be, at least established, that the Picts belonged to the Celtic, and not, as maintained by Pinkerton, and other eminent antiquaries of a former generation, to the Teutonic Family.

It is but fair, however, to say that Mr. Irving, in his *History of Scottish Poetry*, still adheres to the Teutonic theory;<sup>25</sup> and that Mr. Burton, in his *History of Scotland*, expresses himself sceptically with reference to all the solutions of the question hitherto offered; and points to the "close examination lately given to the vestiges of ancient art as promising better results"—the most ancient types of the sculptured stones being "found in the territory inhabited by the Picts."<sup>26</sup> Yet, on the whole, considering the arguments and critical results brought forward by Robertson, MacLachlan, Skene, and others, who appear to have far more fully investigated the subject than either Mr. Irving or Mr. Burton, the weight of evidence appears to me, as I have said, to incline to the Celtic theory of the race-relations of the "Painted People." But two points, which I do not remember to have seen particularly noticed in their connection with each other, have struck me as, at least, curious,—the accordance of the Celtic meaning of Fingalians, *White Strangers*,<sup>27</sup> with the famous description by Tacitus—"Habitus corporum varii; atque ex eo argumenta: namque rutilæ Caledoniam habitantium comæ, magni artus, Germanicam originem adseverant;"<sup>28</sup>—and the occurrence of a

<sup>23</sup> *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. pp. 153 and 161.

<sup>24</sup> Compare the seventh of the ethnological propositions of Colonel Forbes-Leslie: "The Picts were Gaels, but being pressed on by British Celts, and afterwards augmented by British emigrants, became eventually, particularly in the eastern and southern parts of Caledonia, not less Celtic, but to some extent British." *Early Races of Scotland*, v. I. p. 32 *et seq.*

<sup>25</sup> See pp. 5–20.

<sup>26</sup> Vol. I. p. 202.

<sup>27</sup> *Book of the Dean of Lismore*, pp. 102, n.

<sup>28</sup> *Agricola*, xi.

"Finn" in the genealogy of Hengist and Horsa as given by Nennius.<sup>29</sup> And from the epithet applied to Diarmid, "Blue-eyed Hawk," it should seem that the Feinne continued to be a distinctively fair race. All this, however, would only go to prove, what is otherwise highly probable, that the northern stream of Celtic migration were a fair-haired, and large-limbed people, and that they got in some degree mixed with the Teutonic tribes with whom they came in contact, and were, as it should seem, occasionally in alliance.<sup>30</sup> That the Picts, therefore, were Celts, and of the Gadhaelic branch, would appear to be the most just conclusion from our present knowledge.

The geographical relations of these two kindred Celtic races were, in the Pre-mediæval Age, mainly determined by those eastern and western estuaries of the Forth and the Clyde which, according to the remark of Tacitus, almost make of the region to the north of them a separate island. There was, however, also a Pictish population among the Cymry of the south between Loch Ryan and the Nith, apparently the remains of a time when Picts possessed the whole northern half of Britain. But, though Pictish Celts beyond the Forth and Clyde, and Cymric Celts to the south of these Firths, were thus the bases of the Scottish nationality; there were also two other elements, the geographical relations of which to these two chief races of North Britain, in the Pre-mediæval Age, must be here pointed out. Between the Cymric States of the south and the eastern sea, was the kingdom of Bernicia with its Saxon population extending from the Tyne, to the Firth of Forth, and the Esk. And on the south-western side of the Dorsum Britanniae, the great mountain chain of Drumalban, or Backbone of Albion, the Picts had for menacing neighbours, though of kindred Celtic

<sup>29</sup> C. xxxi.

<sup>30</sup> See as to the connection between Vecta and the Vecturiones, as one of the two gentes of the Picts, *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. pp. 107 and 8, and compare SIMPSON (Sir James), *On the Catstane*, etc., in *Proceedings of Soc. of Antiqs. of Scotland*, v. IV. pp. 141 *et seq.*

blood, the small kingdom of Dalriada, founded by immigrant Scots from Ireland, and corresponding, with the exception probably of Ardnamurchan, very nearly to the modern county of Argyle. In the centre of what, in the tenth century, towards the end of this Pre-mediæval Age, is first mentioned as Scotland,<sup>31</sup> these four races met on a sort of neutral ground, comprising the modern counties of Stirling and Linlithgow, and occupied by a mixed population of Picts, Saxons, and Cymry. Into this debateable land the kings of the Scots also frequently carried their arms; in it lay the small districts of Calatria and Manann; and within its limits most of the battles were fought in which the different races encountered each other in the struggle for the mastery.<sup>32</sup>

From the eighth to the tenth century another Teutonic element, besides that of the Lothians and the East coast, was added to the population of Scotland in the settlement on the Orkneys, and on the Western Islands and Mainland, of the Norsemen, driven to be vikings or sea-robbers,<sup>33</sup> by the conquests of Charlemagne, and the tyranny of Gorm, Earic, and Harald Harfager, in attempting to consolidate the petty states of Scandinavia into the respective kingdoms of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway.<sup>34</sup> But this Teutonic element also was ultimately so completely absorbed that the most Celtic part of Scotland is now those very highlands and islands where the Norsemen were at one time supreme. It belongs to the history of the formation of the Scottish nationality, to show how the mastery

<sup>31</sup> *Supra*, p. xli\*. n. 14.

<sup>32</sup> As it was in this great plain also that Bannockburn, and the other great battles of the Mediæval, and subsequent centuries, were fought, Dean Stanley compares with it the great battle-field of Palestine, the plain of Esdraelon, or Armageddon. *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 329, n.

<sup>33</sup> This name, as Robertson has shown, has no connection with *King*, being derived from *Vik*, a bay; *Viking*, a baysman. The royal ship, authorized to destroy in lawful warfare, sailed from the *Hafn*; whilst the rover, privateer, or pirate, put off from the *Vik*, or open bay (*History of Scotland under Her Early Kings*, v. I. pp. 22, n.).

<sup>34</sup> ROBERTSON, *History of Scotland*, v. I. p. 14-2. BURTON, *History of Scotland*, v. I. pp. 232 et seq.

in this war of races, this five-century-long conflict between kindred Celts and between Celts and Teutons, was ultimately obtained by the immigrant Celtic tribe of the Scots. But we may here remark that though the Norsemen have been absorbed, we may still observe traces of Scandinavian influences. For, as we have memorials of the Picts in Fingalian, and of the Cymry in Arthurian Scotland, so, in what I may call Odinian Scotland, have we memorials of the Norsemen. But this, not in a Norse topography, —except occasionally such a name as Thurso,—but in Norse superstitions.<sup>35</sup> That the Teutonic mythology has left its traces only in superstitious customs, while the Celtic mythology has its memorials chiefly in topographical traditions, depends, partly at least, on essential differences between these two mythologies which I hope, in another essay, to have an opportunity of pointing out. Meantime, I cannot, without undue divergence from my present subject, do more than note the fact that those wars of races which, throughout Europe, occupied the Pre-mediæval Age, and which ended in France with the constitution of a Romanic, and in England of a Teutonic nationality, terminated in Scotland in the establishment of a Celtic monarchy;<sup>36</sup> and I can here only point to the important bearing of this fact on the topographical preservation in Scotland alone of the traditions both of Fingal and of Arthur, and hence, of tales belonging to both the great branches of Celtic Mythology.

We find, therefore, first, that Fingalian traditions connect themselves with the Picts, or, at least, with a body of warriors belonging to that race; secondly, that the Fingalian localities of Scotland are not only spread more or less thickly over, but are confined to, the non-Arthurian region; and thirdly, that the Picts, like the Cymry, were a Celtic race; that, speaking generally, the still-existing Fingalian and Arthurian divisions of Scotland coincide with its Pre-mediæval Pictish and Cymric divisions; that is, with

<sup>35</sup> BURTON, v. I. pp. 232 et seq.<sup>36</sup> See above, p. xix\*. n. 5, and p. xliii\*. n. 16.

its divisions as occupied by those races to whom we have traced Fingalian and Arthurian traditions respectively. And this limitation of the Arthurian topography of Scotland to the ancient Cymric kingdoms of the North becomes the more remarkable when we consider the apparent exceptions to the rule. For, as we have seen, the Arthurian localities at Alyth, at Meigle, and near Forfar,—all undoubtedly in the country of the Picts—tell us of Guenivere willingly carried off by the Pictish king Mordred, and pursued, and punished by Arthur. Again we have Arthurian traditions connected with Galloway, which was a southern Pictish province or petty kingdom. But whom do these traditions concern but Gawayne, the son of Loth, the Pictish king of Lothian, and the brother (or half-brother) of Mordred? Do not then, such accordances between Scottish Arthurian traditions, and Pre-mediæval historical facts prove a further confirmation of the theory in this essay maintained, as to the historical origin of Arthurian localities? Again, this chapter will, I trust, have brought out more clearly that historical condition inimical to the importation into the North of Arthurian tradition which was but briefly alluded to in Section (II.) of Chapter II., namely—the existence among the conquering race of the Picts of a poetical literature and historical tradition opposed to that of the Cymry, whose language began to die out in Scotland with the subversion of their native Church in the eighth century. May we not, then, in concluding this chapter, repeat, with additional force, the question, how, except on the hypothesis of the Arthurian traditions having originated in historical events belonging to the Cymric kingdoms of the North, can we explain, not merely the existence of an abundant Arthurian topography in Scotland, but the strict limitation of that topography to the Cymric kingdoms of the Pre-mediæval Age, and its remarkable relation to the Fingalian topography of the ancient Pictish monarchy? I trust, therefore, that the Fingalian relations of Arthurian locali-



ties which I have, in this chapter, pointed-out, may be found to have not only a general interest and suggestiveness, but to afford such a confirmation of my theory of the origin of these localities, as to justify the relevancy of these pages on Pictish Memorials.

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## CHAPTER V.

### CONCLUSION—THE NEW HELLAS.

THUS the question which arose from our preliminary survey of the Old Arthurland—namely, which of its three divisions, that of Scotland, of England, or of France, was the birthland of Arthurian tradition?—should seem to be definitively answered. Or, if this is not admitted, it will, I trust, at least be granted that the number of Arthurian localities now, for the first time, pointed-out in Scotland, has an interest quite independent of our theory of the origin of Arthurian traditions; and further, that the method employed in attempting to solve the problem of the historical origin of these traditions, has the advantage of raising two perfectly definite issues, namely—first, whether the above-stated critical results can, in accordance with all ascertained or ascertainable facts bearing on the subject, be maintained or not? and, secondly, whether the existence of so numerous Arthurian localities in Scotland can be otherwise more probably explained, than on the hypothesis of the historical Arthur having been a leader of the northern Cymry? But though the theory above set-forth is certainly that which seems to me to have the best and surest ground, I desire to add that, while endeavouring to state and defend this theory with all possible clearness, I would not be understood as affirming it with any degree of unscientific dogmatism. And should the only effect of this essay be to stir up some Welsh or Breton antiquary to refute its conclusions, be it so; let knowledge increase, and truth prevail. It will be desirable, however, before proceeding to the main subject of this chapter—the

illustration of the unity and completeness of Scottish Arthurian Localities—to point-out the ethnological relations of Arthurian Scotland. Its geological relations will be briefly indicated in the third section.

#### SECTION (I.)

##### *The Ethnological Relations of Arthurian Scotland.*

First, then, in order that, at least, the prejudices of a false patriotism may not impede the acceptance of this theory of the origin of Arthurian localities, it may be well briefly to show how especially unreasonable such prejudice would, in this case, be. From Breton antiquaries, indeed, one cannot fear that this theory will meet with a prejudiced criticism; for not only have the Bretons, M. de la Villemarqué and M. Ernest Renan, shown themselves regardless of the petty distinctions of Celtic race, or rather tribe; but it is, if not to France, so undisputedly to writers in French,<sup>1</sup> that we owe the moulding of the rude Cymric traditions and legends into their European shape, as Arthurian Romances, that it can hardly be a matter of national prejudice how much, or how little, of these original legends and traditions belonged to Brittany. But why, except, of course, on clear scientific grounds, should Welsh antiquaries, merely as Welshmen, view with disfavour a theory which makes Southern Scotland and the English Border the historical birthland of Arthurian tradition? That which chiefly gives this theory a reasonable foundation, is the fact of the extension of the Cymric kingdoms, in the Pre-mediæval Age, so far beyond the limits of modern Wales, away to the Firths of Forth and Clyde. To show, therefore, the English Border and Southern Scotland to be so rich in Arthurian localities

<sup>1</sup> The distinction is important; for two of the greatest of these writers, Walter Map and Robert de Borron, belonged to the Anglo-Norman Court of Henry II. De Borron would appear to have been an ancestor of Byron. See PEARSON, *Seynt Graal*, v. II. (Roxburgh Club).

as to give strong probability to the theory that, in this region of the old Cymry-land, the Arthurian traditions originated, is thus, surely, not to rob the Cymry of the modern Principality of anything to which even prejudice can attach itself, but, on the contrary, to add to their historic importance and renown.

And as for the Anglo-Saxon prejudice that this essay may encounter, this, of all others, is founded on mistake. The term "Anglo-Saxon" is accurately applied to but a single early period of English history.<sup>2</sup> "Anglo-Saxon," as applied to the modern British people, and Britannic race, I believe every impartial scholar will agree with me in thinking a gross misnomer. For if it can be shewn that there is a large Celtic element even in the population of England itself,<sup>3</sup> still more unquestionable is this, not only with regard to the population of the British Isles generally, but also with reference to the English-speaking peoples of America and Australasia. Even the English are rather Anglo-Celts than Anglo-Saxons; and still more certainly is Anglo-Celtic a more accurate term than Anglo-Saxon, not only for that British nationality which includes the Scots, the Irish, and the Welsh; but also for that Britannic race, chief elements in the formation of which have been Welsh, Scottish, and Irish immigrants. It may, perhaps, be affirmed that this term "Anglo-Saxon" is justified, if not by the numerical and merely quantitative, at least by the intellectual and qualitative predominance of this element in our variously composed race and nationality. But, I venture to think, that such an affirmation will not bear a comparison with facts. Just let one take the trouble to reckon up for this, and the last two or three generations, the so-called "Englishmen," or "Anglo-Saxons" who have been most distinguished, and have exercised the widest influence in the various directions of intellectual activity, philosophical and

<sup>2</sup> See PEARSON, *History of England in the Early and Middle Ages*, v. I., in which Anglo-Saxon has its true application in contradistinction to Anglo-Danish, and Anglo-Norman.

<sup>3</sup> See NICHOLL, *Pedigree of the English*.

literary, political and military, legal and commercial. I believe that, if his list is candidly and impartially made out, he will be surprised to find how many of these "Englishmen" must be set down as, on one side, or on both, Scotsmen; how many also, Irishmen or Welshmen; and surprised to find how many even of the great Englishmen, if their ancestry is looked into, are, if not almost as much Anglo-Celts as the Scots, Irish, or Welsh, most certainly, at least, not Anglo-Saxons. It should seem time, therefore, for every one who cares for true speech—speech in accordance with the realities of things—to abandon this unhappy falsehood about Anglo-Saxons, and to speak rather of Anglo-Celts. No doubt history, particularly religious history, affords many instances of utter fictions having, for a time at least, very beneficial effects. It is needless here to give examples. But, in these days, when the chief political and social questions that occupy us are being raised by the most Celtic element in the commonwealth, it were surely well to cease using a term which is not only scientifically false, but practically pernicious. It was not wholly without reason that the old necromancers believed that there was in words a magical power.

This, however, by the way. What here more particularly concerns us is the fact that, in that district of the British Isles which I have called Arthurian Scotland, not only are all the Celtic races—Cymry, Picts, and Irish Scots—found along with Teutonic Angles in the Pre-mediæval Age; but that, afterwards, both the conquered Saxons and the conquering Normans of England were, by the policy of the Scottish kings, so freely invited and generously beneficed as settlers, that there is no district in Britain which belongs less to any one only of the various elements of the British population; and that here alone have all those elements freely met, and indistinguishably mingled. Whatever the primitive race, therefore, with which we may consider ourselves to be more particularly connected, we shall find records of our ancestors in Arthurian Scotland.

## SECTION (II).

*The Unity and Completeness of Scottish Arthurian Localities.*

But now, one of those results of this investigation, briefly alluded to in the first chapter as giving interest to the solution of the question proposed,<sup>4</sup> must be more particularly noted. For whether I am right or not in the theory of Southern Scotland being the historical birthland of Arthurian tradition; to have shown how numerous are the Arthurian localities of Scotland; and to have pointed out the unique relation that here exists between Arthurian and Fingalian Topography, ought, I venture to think, to be alone sufficient to make Arthurian Scotland the classic land of those who may hereafter make use of the Arthurian Romances as the formal material of their poetic creations. And, as it will not only bring this result more clearly home to my readers, but will afford no slight confirmation to the historical theory in this Essay maintained, it will not be irrelevant to show, in conclusion, that Scotland is not only in the mere number of localities the chief country of Arthurian Tradition; but that there is a very singular unity and completeness in its Arthurian topography in reference to the various characters, tales, and incidents, of the whole cycle of Arthurian Romance.

To see, however, the unity and completeness of these traditional localities, we must first have reduced to some order the Arthurian legends and romantic tales themselves. They will, I think, be found very distinctly divisible into six classes. As either the first or last class of these legends, we may consider those which relate to the enchanted sleep, and resurrection of the Arthurian chivalry. Then we have the five classes of adventures to which, borrowing the title of the lost work of the early Scottish poet, "Huchowne of the Awle Ryale," we may give the name of "The Great Geste of Arthur."

The first class of the adventures of the "Great Geste," including the various stories of the forest life of Merlin and the young

<sup>4</sup> *Supra*, pp. xxx. and xxxi.

Arthur ; the loves of both master and pupil ; the election of Arthur as king ; the victory of the national cause, of which he is the representative ; his marriage and the establishment of the Table Rounde, we may conveniently distinguish under the title of the Romance of the Forest, or the Youth of Arthur. Then we find in these legends and tales a great number of scenes, incidents, and characters, which belong to all the various kinds into which the systematic Germans have, in their treatises on æsthetics, classified *Das Komische*. Of this part of the "Great Geste," at once the most prominent and heroic character is, at least in the earlier romances, that noble Don Giovanni, the gay knight of Galloway, the courteous Sir Gawayne ; and its most important incidents are those which bring the "Aventyres of Arthure at the Tern Wathelyne," to a happy conclusion in the marriage of Sir Gawayne, and the retransformation of the Foul Ladye, and the Grim Baron. This class, therefore, of Arthurian stories may be generalized, and distinguished as the Comedy of the Table Rounde, or the Marriage of Sir Gawayne. Next in order may come that great class of adventures connected with the "atchieving of the San Greal," and contained in those romances which form a variously told epic, in which the chivalrous and religious spirit of the Crusades had its most popular contemporary poetic expression. This third part of the stories of the "Great Geste of Arthur" may, then, be distinguished as the History of the Quest of the Holy Grail, or the Wars of Sir Perceval ; for he is ever the chief of the knights who achieve the Quest. And under this class may be also conveniently included those earlier legends of the foreign victories of Arthur, of which the adventures of the Quest afterwards took the place. Then, as the fourth part of the "Great Geste," we have the tragic stories of the discovery of the long unfaithfulness of the wife, and of the friend, and the news of the treason of the bastard son ; the death of the noble, and beloved Sir Gawayne, the wound given him by Sir Lancelot fatally re-opened in

the first battle against the revolted Mordred; the still more tragic scenes of the loveworn end of Merlin, and of the prophecies from his mystic tomb; the last parting, and soon thereafter the death of Guenivere, and of "the truest lover of a synfull man that euer loved woman; the kyndest man that ever stroke wyth swerde; the goodelyest persone that euer came among prees of knyghtes; the mekest man and the gentyllest that euer ete in halle among ladyes; and the sternest knyghte to his mortall foo that euer put spere in the reyst;"<sup>6</sup> and, finally, the terrible mutual slaughter of the battle by the Western Sea, "with the dolourous deth, and departyng out of thys worlde of them al." But not thus ends this wondrous Cycle of Romance. Succeeding those which may be distinguished as belonging to "the Tragedy of the Morte d'Arthur, or the Revolt of Mordred," we find a class of tales which not only give to the varied and tragic story of the "Great Geste" a high artistic repose and satisfaction, but a sort of infinite atmosphere. Such are the tales of the sore-wounded Arthur being borne away over the waves by the Ladies of Avalon to their Blessed Island in the West. And this class may be generally designated "The Vision of Avalon, or the Departing into Light."

Now what I would here point out is that the chief characters of the legends and romantic tales of all these six different classes are connected with the North; that not only are local habitations to be found in Arthurian Scotland for the chief incidents of these romances and traditions; but that these Scottish localities are all in the most natural relation to each other; in just such relation, indeed, as, had the Great Geste of Arthur been actually played out in Scotland, instead of being merely a Mediæval cycle of romantic adventures, the localities of its incidents would most probably have borne to each other; and hence, that these Romances must have had, as their bases, historical characters, adventures, and conflicts of Pre-mediæval Scotland.

\* MALORY, *The Byrth, Lyf, and Actes of Kyng Arthur*, v. II. pp. 453-4. (Edit. SOUTHEY).

First, then, as to the persons of the Arthurian Romance Cycle. To Scotland alone, so far as I am aware, belong distinct traditions,—either still living, as they for the most part are, or preserved in legendary histories,—not only of Arthur, but of Guenivere, of Lancelot, and of Mordred; of Loth, the brother-in-law of Arthur, and of his nephew Gawayne; of the Foul Ladye, and the Grim Baron; of Perceval, the hero of the Quest of the Holy Grail; and, above all, of Merlin the Wild, his twin-sister Ganiada, and his life-long love, Viviana, the divine Lady of the Lake. And in saying this, I but state one of the results of which the proofs have already been given in the account of my exploration of Arthurian Scotland.

Then, as to the localities of the incidents of these Romances, observe, first, that of all the places with traditions attached to them of the enchanted sleep of Arthur and his Knights, there seems to be none that can, either in scenic, or traditional importance, vie with those Eildon Hills which form the fit centre of Arthurian Scotland. Then, as the appropriately romantic scene of the first part of the Great Geste we have the Merlin-haunted Caledonian Forest; Arthur's Seat, Arthur's Lee, and Arthur's Fountain; the Queen of Scottish Lakes, Loch Lomond, or the Lake of Elms, in an island of which may well be feigned to have arisen the enchanted Garden of Joy; the twelve great battlefields of the Freedom-War, ending with that of Bowden Hill; and the scenically unsurpassed Arthurian Castles of Edinburgh, Stirling, and Dumbarton. Then, as the fit scene of the Comedy, we have the Kingdom of Logres, with Joyeuse Garde, the Castle of Seven Shields, Cardueil, Inglewood Forest, Castle Hewen, the Tarn Wathelyne, the Green Chapel, and the other localities I have noted on the English Border. The scenes of the Quest of the Holy Grail, as of the continental conquests of Arthur, forming the third part of the Great Geste, are, of course, beyond the limits of Arthurian Scotland. For, where these scenes are not laid in a wholly unidentifiable region, corresponding to their supernatural character, they are



generally in the sacred East, where is "the citie of Crist our the salt flude." But, with the fourth part of the Geste, we may again return to Scotland, and find fit traditional localities for the tragic incidents of the Morte d'Arthur, in the Chatel Orgueilleux ; Joyeuse Garde, become again Dolorous Garde ; Wedale, or the Vale of Woe ; the Tomb and perennial Thorn of Merlin, where the Stream of Willows joins the Tweed in the midst of his beloved Caledonian Forest ; the solitary northern Grave of Guenivere ; and the sunset battle-plain of Arderydd. Finally, over the Solway, as the Great Western Lake adjoining the last fatal battle-field, may fitly rise for us the Vision of Avalon.

#### SECTION (III).

##### *The Geological Relations of Arthurian Scotland.*

Such is the completeness and unity of the Arthurian Topography of Scotland, in reference to all the chief characters, and all the various classes of tales comprised in the Arthurian Romance-cycle. But not less distinctly marked, and complete in itself, is the region distinguished by this topography, both in a geological, and scenic point of view. For this Scottish district of Arthurian localities corresponds, with very singular accuracy, with two out of the four great geological divisions of the country. The first two of these are the Highlands, east and west of the Glen-more-nan-albin, the Great Glen of Albion, through which is cut the Caledonian Canal. This Highland region is separated from the rest of the country by what was anciently called the Mounth ; the chain of the Grampians running from south-west to north-east, from Ben Nevis (4406 feet) to the Girdleness, the southern promontory of the Bay of Aberdeen ; and having, as its central domes, Ben-muich-dhui (4300 ft.), and the surrounding Cairngorm Mountains, all averaging upwards of 4000 ft. It is chiefly, if not exclusively along, or within this line, prolonged to the Mull of Cantyre, that are found the localities of Fingalian Tradition. Cut-

ting this mountain-chain at right angles, and forming the great wind- and water-shear which separates the waters flowing into the western sea from those running eastwards, is the other great mountain range of the Highlands, called, in Latin, *Dorsum Britannicæ* and *Dorsi Montes Britannici*, and, in Gaelic, *Drum-alban*,—*Drum* being the equivalent of the Latin *Dorsum*. It takes its rise north of the isthmus, separating the Firths of Forth and Clyde, in the mountains of which Ben Lomond is the chief; is broken by the great moor of Rannoch, but intersects the Mounth or Grampians at Ben Alder; crosses the Great Glen of Scotland at Achendrum, “the field of the *Drum*,” and finally loses itself in the mountains of Sutherland.<sup>6</sup>

The two other geological divisions of Scotland are the Midland Valley (valley, however, only in a geological sense) and the Southern Uplands; the latter separated from the former by a line curiously parallel with that of the Grampians, running, like it, from south-west to north-east; from Girvan in Ayrshire, to Dunbar in Haddingtonshire. It is these two southern geological divisions that form, with the adjoining English border, what, characterizing it by its traditional topography, I would call Arthurian Scotland.

Thus do we see the vast secular changes of geology connected with, and determining such phenomena of a day as those which belong to human ages. Through millions of years worked the slow forces of which the outcome were the present geological divisions of Scotland. And these, at length, determined the seats of two families of a race of men, and the localities of their distinctive traditions.

The general scenery of these two great northern and southern divisions of Scotland is strikingly dissimilar. And yet, in this difference, there is an interesting similarity to the contrasted characteristics of the different but allied cycles of tradition and romance, Fingalian and Arthurian, of which the northern and southern districts respectively are the seats. Beyond the line of

<sup>6</sup> Compare SKENE, *Chronicles of the Picts and Scots*, pp. lxxxiii.-iv.

the Grampians "a sea of mountains rolls away to Cape Wrath in wave after wave of gneiss, schist, quartz rock, granite, and other crystalline masses." And the Fingalian legends seem full of the sentiment that the rocks and caverns resounding with the Atlantic waves,—that the deep glens, and the dark mountain-lochs,—that the fleeing and pursuing shadows of the clouds on the mountain-sides,—and that, above all, the intermingling of the feminine grace and tenderness of the birch with the stately grandeur of the pine,—the intermingling of the bright and joyous music of the flashing, heather-purpling sunbeams, with the sterner, wilder voices of the storm-swept hills, would appear well-fitted to create in an imaginative and noble race.

Very different is the scenery of the southern division with the broad belt of Lower Old Red Sandstone at the base of the Grampians, the igneous rocks, and carboniferous strata of the Midland district; and the hard greywacké, shale, and limestone bands of the Silurian Uplands. Broad Firths,—Tay, Forth, and Clyde; wide, fertile plains, such as that of Strathmore between the Grampians, and the low, seaward range of the Ochils, and the Sidlaws; and abrupt, isolated crags and hills, form the chief physical features of the former district; while the latter presents us with many fountained, green-rolling, pastoral hills, breaking down into river-lighted dales, famous in story and in song. To these succeed the wild moorlands, the rich vales, and ancient forest-lands of the English border. Such, generally described, is the scenery of Arthurian Scotland. And in its more romantic, and varied, but less grand, and awe-inspiring character, it contrasts no less strongly with Scotland beyond the Grampians; than do the elaborate and worldly Arthurian Romances that find in it the fit localities of their incidents, with the primitive Fingalian traditions recalled by so many a mountain, cave, and glen, in the more northern, and wilder region.

<sup>1</sup> GEIKIE, *Geology and Scenery of Scotland*, p. 91.

To conclude, it is not merely to the antiquary, I venture to think, that this discussion of the origin of Arthurian localities, determination of their chief country, and indication of their Fingalian relations, may be of interest. For the new conceptions of the world, and of human history, and destiny, that science is forcing upon us, require a New Poesy for their synthetic expression; a new poesy to show that life, so far from being stripped, by the discoveries of science, of all that makes it, to the nobler sort, worth having, is, on the contrary, by the progress of scientific knowledge, invested with a new beauty, a more tragic grandeur, and inspired with a deeper sense of the environing Infinite. New conceptions require new forms for their poetic expression. And as the Italian novels of the Renaissance were a mine of poetic forms for our Elizabethan dramatists; or as, to take a more appropriate example, the old Greek legends, made an *Iliad* and an *Odyssey* of by Homer, furnished the poets of the great age of Greece with the forms of their immortal dramas; so, I believe, will the Pre-mediæval Celtic legends, as they have been prepared for us by the poetic romancers of the Mediæval Age, be found to present the most varied and easily adaptable material for the European poets who will dare unreservedly to accept Science. And, if I am right in thus thinking, then, the country in which these Pre-mediæval Celtic legends had, with such probability as may appear from the foregoing chapters, their historical origin; the country in which alone localities belonging to both the great formations of Celtic mythology have, like the shells that distinguish different but allied strata, been discovered; the country in which, particularly, the Arthurian traditions have been shown, if not indisputably to have originated, at least to have now their most numerous, and complete, their most scenically various, and romantic topographical records, will become a New Hellas.

LIST  
OF  
SIXTH-CENTURY LOCALITIES  
IN  
"THE NORTH;"  
OR  
THE LOCALITIES  
OF  
ARTHURIAN SCOTLAND.

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NOTE.—These Localities are distinguished as Traditional, Historical,—chiefly occurring in *Nennius*; and Poetical,—for the most part found in the *Four Ancient Books*. The testimonies to the age of the Traditional Localities, the references to the original sources for the Historical and Poetical Localities, and the authorities for the identifications of Localities of these two latter classes, are given at full in the third chapter. And the Localities will be found in that chapter under the same heads, and in much the same order as they are here given.

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EASTERN DIVISION.

DISTRICT I.—STRATHMORE.

MORDRED'S CASTLE . . . . .	Fort on Barry Hill, near Alyth.
GANORE'S GRAVE . . . . .	In Churchyard of Meikle.
STONE OF ARTHUR . . . . .	} In Parish of Cupar Angus.
ARTHURSTONE . . . . .	
ARTHUR'S FOLD . . . . .	
ARTHUR'S SEAT . . . . .	Rock on Dunbarrow Hill.
TAWY . . . . .	The Tay.
BENOIC . . . . .	Albanak, or Albany.

DISTRICT II.—FIRTH-OF-FORTH.

FRENESSICUM, OR FRISICUM MARE .	The Firth of Forth.
FRISICUM LITUS . . . . .	North shore of Firth.
CULROSS . . . . .	Monastery on North shore.
GWRUID OR WERID . . . . .	The Forth.
TRATHEU TRYWRUID . . . . .	Links of Forth, or Carse of Stirling.
SNOWDON WEST CASTLE . . . . .	Castle of Stirling.
KING'S KNOT, OR ARTHUR'S ROUND } TABLE . . . . .	Under Stirling Castle.
ARTHUR'S O'ON (OVEN). . . . .	
CAERE, OR CARUN . . . . .	The Carron.
RYD AT TARADYR . . . . .	The Ford of Torrator on the Carron.
BASSAS . . . . .	Dunipais (Dunipace).
CAMLAN . . . . .	Camelon, near Falkirk.
CATRAETH, GALTRAETH, OR CALA- } THROS . . . . .	Calatria.—East end of Stirlingshire.
HAEFE, OR AERON . . . . .	
CAIRPRE . . . . .	Carriber.
MANAN, OR CAMPUS MANAND . .	Slamannan Moor.
LODONEIS . . . . .	Lothian.
GODODIN . . . . .	North part of Lothian.
BODGAD, OR BADCAT . . . . .	Bathgate.
KALDRA . . . . .	Calder Water.
MONS BADONIS . . . . .	Bowden Hill.
LECHLLEUTU . . . . .	Linlithgow.
AGATHES . . . . .	Irongath Hill.
CAER EIDDYN . . . . .	Caredin.
PENGUAL, PEANFAHEL, PENNELTON, } OR CENAIL . . . . .	Town at east end of W. of Antonine.
YNYS EIDDYN . . . . .	
ABERCURNIG . . . . .	Abercorn.
CAER GOVANNON . . . . .	Dalmeny.
CAER VANDWY, OR CAER AMON . .	Cramond.
CAER SIDI, URBS GIUDI, OR JUDEU ?	Island in Firth of Forth—Inchkeith (?).
MYNVD AGNED, OR DUNEDIN . .	Edinburgh Castle.
CASTRUM PUELLARUM, OR CASTLE OF } MAIDENS . . . . .	
DOLOROUS VALLEY . . . . .	

GRAVE OF VECTA (?) . . . . .	The Cat-stane, Kirkliston.
ARTHUR'S SEAT . . . . .	At Edinburgh.
DUNPELEDUR, OR DUNPENDER LAW.	Trapender Law, near Haddington.
DUBGLAS . . . . .	Dunglas (?).
BASSAS . . . . .	Bass (?).
KEPDUFF . . . . .	Kilduff.
ABERLEFDI . . . . .	Aberlady Bay.
THE BUSH OF MAW . . . . .	The Moss of Maw.

## DISTRICT III.—TWEEDDALE.

GWAEDOL, WEDALE, OR VALLIS	} Vale of Gala.
DOLORIS . . . . .	
GWENYSTRAD, OR THE WHITE STRATH	} Roman Fort on Gala Water.
CASTLE GUINNION, OR GARANWYNYON	
CHURCH OF S. MARY . . . . .	At Stowe.
WHITE STONE OF GALYSTEM . . .	Near the Lady's Well at Stowe.
TYWI . . . . .	The Tweed.
S. MUNGO'S WELL . . . . .	At Peebles.
NEMUS CALEDONIS, OR COED CELYD-	} Caledonian Forest.
DON . . . . .	
MERLIN'S GRAVE . . . . .	At Drummelzier.
TEIFI . . . . .	The Teviot.
DIN GUORTIGERN . . . . .	On the Teviot.
TOMB OF ARTHUR AND HIS KNIGHTS	Under the Eildons.
DIN DREI, URBS GIUDI, OR JUDEU.	On the Eildon Hills (?)
CATRAETH . . . . .	Near the Eildons (?).
MELROS . . . . .	Melrose.
RHYMER'S GLEN . . . . .	} At Abbotsford.
HUNTLY BURN . . . . .	
RHYMER'S TOWER . . . . .	At Earlston on Leader Water.
CALCHVYNID, OR CALCHOW . . .	Kelso.
ATBRET JUDEU AND JUDEU (?) . .	Near Jedburgh (?).
GODODIN . . . . .	District about Jedburgh (?)
THE GLENI, OR GLEIN (?) . . . .	The Glen—Tributary of the Till.
ABERWICK, OR JOYEUSE GARDE . .	Berwick.

## SOUTHERN DIVISION.

## DISTRICT IV.—NORTHUMBERLAND.

NORTHOMBELLANDE . . . . .	Northumberland.
BERNEICH AND TER BRENECH . .	Berenicia, or Valentia.
LLEU . . . . .	The Low.
MEDGAUD INSULA . . . . .	Holy Island, or Lindisfarne.
DINGUAYRDI, DINGUAROY, GUURTH- BERNEICH, BEBBANBURGH, OR CHATEL ORGUEILLEUX . . . . .	} Bamborough.
ARTHUR'S HILL . . . . .	
SEWING SHIELDS CASTLE . . . .	} On the Roman Wall near House- steads.
KING'S AND QUEEN'S CRAGS . . .	
ARTHUR'S CHAIR . . . . .	
CUMMING'S CROSS . . . . .	
DAGSESTAN . . . . .	Dawston.

## DISTRICT V.—CUMBERLAND.

ARTHUR'S HILL . . . . .	In Liddesdale.
CAER GWENDDOLEW . . . . .	} Moat or Strength of Liddel, near the village and burn of Carwhinelow.
ERYDON . . . . .	
ARDERYDD . . . . .	Arthuret
CAER LLIWELYDD, OR CARDUEIL .	Carlisle.
GUASMORIC . . . . .	} Near Carlisle (Palmecastre, or Wal- meceastre).
EDEN . . . . .	
INGLEWOOD FOREST . . . . .	Ditto.
TARN WATHELYNE . . . . .	Tarn Wadling.
CASTLE HEWIN . . . . .	Near Upper Hesket.
BARON-WOOD . . . . .	On the Eden.
HATTON HALL . . . . .	} Same name still.
PLUMPTON PARK . . . . .	
ARTHUR'S ROUND TABLE . . . .	Near Penrith.
BROUGHAM CASTLE . . . . .	
GWENSTERI . . . . .	Winster
DERWENNYD. . . . .	Derwent.
VOLSTY CASTLE . . . . .	
THE GRENE CHAPEL . . . . .	Chapel of the Green.
MANAU, OR EUBONIA . . . . .	Isle of Man.



## DISTRICT VI.—GALLOWAY.

GALWADLÆ MARE. . . . .	Solway Firth.
GALWYDDEL. . . . .	Galloway.
HODDELM . . . . .	Hoddam.
CHURCH OF S. MUNGO . . . . .	Parish ? of same name.
MABON . . . . .	Nithsdale and Lochmaben.
MAN-LLACHAR. . . . .	Lochar Moss.
CLUDVEIN, OR CLEDYFEIN . . . . .	The Cluden.
GARANT . . . . .	The Carron—Tributary of the Nith.
CAER RYWC . . . . .	Sanquhar on the Crawick.
CUTHBRITISKCHIRCH . . . . .	Kirkcudbright.
GRAVE OF GWALLAWG AP LLEENAWG	King Galdus's Tomb.
KIRKGAWAYNE ? . . . . .	Kirkcowan.
MARSH OF TERRA. . . . .	Glenterra.
CAER RHEON . . . . .	Cairnryan.
LLWCH RHEON . . . . .	Loch Ryan.
RHYD RHEON . . . . .	Ford of Ryan.
NOVANT . . . . .	Mull of Galloway.

## WESTERN DIVISION.

## DISTRICT VII.—AYR.

CARRAWG . . . . .	Carrick.
COEL . . . . .	Kyle.
CANOWAN . . . . .	Cunningham.
DINDYWYDD . . . . .	Dunduff.
DYVNWYDD . . . . .	A District of Ayr.
GRAVE OF CARADAWG . . . . .	Tomb of Caractacus.
CAER CARADAWG. . . . .	Caractonium.
GAFRAN . . . . .	Girvan.
GRAVE OF COEL . . . . .	Tomb of King Cole at Coilsfield.
CRAGS OF KYLE . . . . .	} Near town of Ayr.
BURN OF COYL . . . . .	
PARISH OF COYLTON . . . . .	
BRETRWYN . . . . .	Promontory of Troon.
DUNDEVENEL . . . . .	Dundonald.
GLENI OR GLEIN . . . . .	The Glen—Tributary of Irvine.
WOOD OF BEIT . . . . .	Moor of Beith.

## DISTRICT VIII.—STRATHCLYDE.

CLUD . . . . .	The Clyde.
MERLIN'S FOUNTAIN. . . . .	Sources of Clyde (?).
ARTHUR'S FOUNTAIN. . . . .	In parish of Crawford.
ARFYNYDD . . . . .	Upper Strathclyde..
LLANERCH . . . . .	Lanark.
GODEU . . . . .	Caidzow—Middle ward of Lanarkshire,
CALATERIUM NEMUS. . . . .	Calderwood.
REGIO LINTHEAMUS, OR LINTHCAMUS	Cambuslang.
MOUNTAIN OF BANNAWC . . . . .	Cathkin Hills in p. of Carmunnock.
ARECLUTA . . . . .	Strathgryfe, or Renfrewshire.
ARTHUR'S LEE. . . . .	} In Neilston Parish.
LOW ARTHUR'S LEE. . . . .	
WEST ARTHUR'S LEE . . . . .	
CAER CLUD, OR PENRYN WLETH . . . . .	Glasgow.
MONS GWLETH. . . . .	Dew, or Dowhill, at Glasgow.
S. MUNGO'S WELL . . . . .	In Cathedral of Glasgow.

## DISTRICT IX.—LENNOX.

MUREIFF. . . . .	North side of Roman Wall, or Mur.
REGED. . . . .	The same, including Loch Lomond.
ARGOED LLWYFAIN . . . . .	District about Ben Lomond.
DINRIDDWG . . . . .	Mugdock.
ARDUNNION. . . . .	Ardinny.
DRUM ESSYD . . . . .	Kilsyth Hills.
HEIGHT OF ADOYN . . . . .	Cliff on western brow of Fintry Hills
NEMHTUR, OR NEVTUR. . . . .	} Dumbarton.
CATHRAIG IN LEOMHAN . . . . .	
URBS LEOGIS, OR LEGIONIS . . . . .	
KAERLIUM, OR KAERLION . . . . .	
ALCLYDE, OR PETRA CLOTHE . . . . .	
CASTRUM ARTHURI, OR ARTHUR'S CASTLE. . . . .	} The Leven.
LEUM, LEAMHUIN, OR LEAMHAN . . . . .	
STAGNUM LIVAN, LUMUNOY, OR LIMONIUM, LLWCH LLIVANAD . . . . .	} Loch Lomond.
LEAMHANACH, LEVENACHS', LLWY- FENYDD, OR LINNUIS . . . . .	
DUGLAS . . . . .	The Douglas.
BEN ARTHUR . . . . .	At head of Loch Long.

## NOTE

### ON THE ARGUMENT FOR ARTHUR AS A WEST-OF-ENGLAND KING.

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PROOFS of the foregoing Essay having been forwarded by Mr. Furnivall to Mr. Pearson, the learned author of the *History of England in the Early and Middle Ages*, a discussion took place between him and myself, at the close of which I requested him to give me a memorandum of the chief points in his case, in order that the question as to the Historical Origin of Arthurian Localities generally, and as to the locality of Arthur's exploits in particular, might be presented with the utmost possible fairness and completeness to those who might be interested in the subject. This he has very courteously, and obligingly done. And my readers will thus have an opportunity of judging for themselves whether the established theory, which could not, I believe, have any more able and learned defender than Mr. Pearson, or the new theory, advocated by Mr. Skene and myself, rests on the better evidence.

But before presenting his note, I would offer a few remarks on its general bearing in reference to the theory in the foregoing Essay maintained. And in the first place, I would observe that his argument touches only a small part of that general theory. For I have endeavoured to show not merely that, of the three regions of the traditional Arthur-land—Southern Scotland, Western England, and North-Western France—the historical Arthur, or the Arthur of Nennius, belonged to the first-mentioned; but also, that, of a large proportion, at least, of the ancient historical poems of the Cymry,

the scenery and events belong to Southern Scotland, with which likewise are connected the warriors celebrated in these poems, and the bards who sing their praises ; further, not only that personages, more or less directly and intimately connected with the Arthurian story, such, for instance, as Merlin and Kentigern, historically belong to the South of Scotland, and to the Arthurian Age ; but that all the chief characters of the Arthurian Romances are to be found, in a topographically preserved and still living tradition, in what I have called Arthurian Scotland, and, as far as I am aware, in that region alone ; and finally, that these topographical records and traditional tales are in the most striking accordance with historical facts.

Now, whatever objections may be urged by Mr. Pearson or others against a theory which places Arthur as an historical personage in the North, I have but little fear that any competent scholar will be found prepared to deny that these ancient Cymric poems do for the most part belong to Arthurian Scotland ; that to the same region the historical Merlin belonged ; that there also are to be found a greater number and variety of Arthurian traditions than in any other region of the Old Arthur-land ; and that such traditions have there more remarkable historical correspondences than are anywhere else to be discovered. But if such facts as these cannot be denied ; then, I think, that what appears to be the legitimate inference from them must be accepted ;—namely, that it was in actual characters, incidents, and conflicts of the Pre-mediæval History of Scotland that the traditions, topographically preserved in Arthurian Localities, originated ; and that in such actual characters, incidents, and conflicts, the historic element of the Arthurian Romances of Mediæval European Literature is to be found. This, however, is all that I am concerned to maintain. But let us see what Mr. Pearson can say in favour of the hypothesis that Arthur was not a leader of the Cymry of Southern Scotland, but a petty king of Western England.

Most singular, I will only remark, it would be if, in conjunction with such facts as the above, such an hypothesis should force itself upon us :

“There seem to me to be fairly good reasons for referring Arthur to a district in the South or West of England, in spite of the fact that Scotland is distinctly richer in Arthurian localities. The one historical event with which we can almost certainly connect his name is the battle of Mons Badonicus; and this is referred by Gildas to the year 520,<sup>1</sup> when we have reason to think that the West Saxons were beginning to press on the Britons of Somersetshire and Wiltshire, whereas the wars of Ida in the North with the Kymri of the Western Lowlands are ascribed to a later period (A.D. 547) by our earliest notices.<sup>2</sup> The tradition commemorated in the *Vita Gildæ*, that Arthur, King of Cornwall and Devon, was at war with Melvas of Somersetshire, points to a district in the South; and if Melvas be indeed the Maglocunus, or Maelgoun of Gwynedd, whom Gildas speaks of as making war on his uncle, contracting an unlawful marriage, and turning monk, his resemblance to the Lancelot of romance becomes very great.<sup>3</sup> After Gildas our first authority for Arthur's history is Nennius. Now the English Nennius (who was certainly not ignorant of Cumbrian history, as he gives us most valuable details about Ida and Urien), says, if we take his words literally, that Arthur led the kings of the Britons in their wars against the kings of the Cantii.<sup>4</sup> It is true that the passage may be explained to mean that he led them against the Saxons; but even if we adopt this rendering, it is surely more natural to apply the term “Saxons” to the people strictly so called at the time when Nennius wrote (West Saxons, South Saxons, etc.), than to

<sup>1</sup> WENDOVER, I. p. 64. GILDAS; Pref. by STEVENSON, p. ix.

<sup>2</sup> A. S. Chron. A. 547. *Sim. Dun. Prefatio*.

<sup>3</sup> *Vita S. Gildæ*, c. 10. *Epistola Gildæ*, c. c. 33-35.

<sup>4</sup> NENNIUS, c. 56. I have not taken into account the marginal note to one observation of Nennius, which places Bregnon, the scene of one of Arthur's battles in Somersetshire, or the marginal gloss on Gildas, which says that Mount Badon was near the mouth of the Severn. But they are at least evidence of concurrent traditions.

assume that it refers to a colony of their ancestors, seated for a time in Northumbria.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, the death-song of Geraint connects that hero, who was of Dyvnaint or Devonian, with Arthur.<sup>6</sup> These notices one and all, therefore, refer Arthur to a district in the South and West; while none that I know of takes him into the North till the times of Geoffrey of Monmouth.

<sup>5</sup> Mr. Glennie informs me, on Mr. Skene's authority, that the Cambridge MS. of Nennius reads "Tunc Arthur pugnabat contra illos, videlicet Saxones." The question, then, is whether or not "Saxones" can be referred to Angles north of the Humber, or to a Saxon colony that preceded the Angles in those parts. To myself the words of Nennius seem distinctly to imply that he was thinking of the South of England. Throughout the *Historia Britonum* he uses the word Saxons (taken alone) in its special sense, and calls the people against whom Dutigirn fought (c. 62), Angles, the people whom Ecgfrith ruled "Saxones ambronum" (c. 57), and Edwin's subjects "ambrones" simply (c. 63). "Ambrones" I take to be a corrupt form of Bede's word "Hymbrenenses" (H. E. IV. c. 17) Humbrians, and its use with "Saxones" seems to me to imply that Nennius did not like to speak of Northumbrians generally as Saxons without qualification. Gildas uses the name Saxons for the people who fought against Vortigern and Aurelius Ambrosius, but seems not to know the name Angles. Bede speaks more than once of "Anglorum sive Saxonum" as if they were convertible terms (H. E. I. c. 15, V. c. 9), and applies either name to the people of Kent (whom he knows more precisely as Jutes), and sometimes seems to speak of the Germanic conquerors of Britain generally as Angles. But he never, so far as I am aware, uses the term Saxons in speaking of Northumbrians, or as a general name like Augli. An examination of the *Codex Diplomaticus* has shown me two cases in which the term Angli is perhaps used generally for Englishmen before the reign of Alfred. Under Alfred and Edward the Elder, the term "Anglo-Saxon" seems to be that most favoured. Afterwards the use of "Anglus" prevails. But I know of no instance in any Anglo-Saxon charter or author in which the name Saxon is applied to Englishmen of the North. It is true the practice of Keltic writers is not equally invariable. The Gododin poems twice designate the enemy against whom the British chiefs engaged, have fought, or are fighting, as Saxons; and probably refer in both cases to the Germanic population of Northumbria. It is true, too, as Mr. Glennie has pointed out to me, that Nennius must have thought of Ochtha and Ebissa, the son or nephew of Hengest, who, he says (c. 38), occupied country up to the confines of the Picts, as Saxons in the strictest sense. But I do not think these exceptions can outweigh the general consent on the other side, or the indications derived from the language of Nennius, when he connects the rise of the Saxons with Ochtha's emigration southward, and the history of the kingdom of Kent. I may add that, as far as I can discover, Nennius never applies the name "Brittones" to the Keltic peoples North of Solway, in the fifth century.

<sup>6</sup> SKENE, *Four Ancient Books*, v. I. p. 267. I may add, that whether Llongborth be the Longport of Kent, the Langport of Somersetshire, or merely a port on the coast, it seems to point to an attack by sea which might easily be made in South England, but not, I think, in Scotland. It is noticeable, too, that Geraint was a Devonian name. *Aldelmi Opera*, p. 83.

"Looking now to mere probabilities, I find that Cornwall, Devonshire, and parts of Wiltshire and Somersetshire, maintained their independence till the time of Ine.<sup>7</sup> I find that a principality composed of Somersetshire and part of Wiltshire, of Gloucestershire and Worcestershire, of Hereford and Monmouth, defended by Selwood Forest, by the Cotswold Woods, by Wire Forest, and by the Somersetshire marshes, had its own dynasty of chiefs before the Romans,<sup>8</sup> and a metropolitan city for a native church at Caerleon in the sixth century.<sup>9</sup> A sovereign of this country with a certain federal supremacy over Devonshire and Cornwall in the South, and Powys and Gwynedd in the North, would come into collision with the Saxons along the marshes of Wiltshire, and the line of the Severn, and with the people of South Wales (whether Gaelic or Kymric at that time) in Glamorganshire.<sup>10</sup> In these districts may be found localities that correspond pretty exactly to the names of Arthur's battles as given by Nennius.<sup>11</sup>

"Take now the evidence of legend. In the Breton traditions collected by Geoffrey of Monmouth, Arthur is born at Tintagel, crowned first in Silchester by Dubricius, Archbishop of Caerleon on Usk, and afterwards more solemnly at Caerleon, and dies in Cornwall, and is buried in the Isle of Avalon. Even the Metrical Boece, which transfers the battle of Camlan to the Humber, steadily represents Arthur as King of South Britain. William of Malmesbury, whose *Liber de Antiq. Glaston. Ecc.* was written about the middle of the twelfth century, gives a legend from the gests of

<sup>7</sup> GUEST, *On the Boundaries of the Welsh and English Races. Archaeological Journal*, xvi. pp. 105-132.

<sup>8</sup> AKERMAN, *On the Condition of Britain, Archæologia*, xxxiii. p. 177. GODWIN'S *Archæologist's Manual*, pp. 16, 17.

<sup>9</sup> ROWLAND WILLIAMS, *On the supposed reluctance of the West British Church to convert the Anglo-Saxons. Archæologica Camb.* Oct. 1858. Mr. Stevenson thinks that Gloucester and Somerset were two of the dioceses. BEDE, *Hist. Ecc.* p. 100, note.

<sup>10</sup> "A line drawn from Conway on the north to Swansea on the south would separate the two races of the Gwyddyl, and the Cymry on the west and on the east." SKENE, *Four Ancient Books*, v. l. p. 43.

<sup>11</sup> E.g. I should place the four battles in "regione Linnuis" in the district of the Llyfni (Glamorganshire); that at Bassas near Baschurch, in Shropshire; that of Urbs Legionis at Caerleon on Usk, and that of Mount Badon at Bath.

King Arthur, which does not exist in Geoffrey of Monmouth, and which speaks of him as holding court at "Karlium," and visiting Glastonbury. William also says that Arthur gave lands to Glastonbury, and was buried there with his wife between two pyramids.<sup>12</sup> As the historian does not speak of the disinterment of Arthur's body, he probably wrote before it took place in 1166;<sup>13</sup> and this is the more likely, as he was born in the preceding century. He is, therefore, independent evidence to a tradition slightly anterior to the search made, and probably anterior to the history of Geoffrey of Monmouth, the last six books of which were not published before 1147. The search for Arthur's remains has been twice described by Giraldus Canbrensis, in the *De Instructione Principum*,<sup>13</sup> and in the *Speculum Ecclesie*.<sup>14</sup> The latter and fuller account, which refers with some contempt to the "fabulosi Britones," who made Morgan a fairy, is written with a minuteness which seems to me incompatible with wanton lying. Both narratives are posterior to Henry the Second's time, and therefore were not written to support his policy. Both dwell upon the fact that Guenever's hair crumbled into dust when it was exposed to the air. Clearly the Glastonbury monks could not have forged evidence of this kind. The most that can be said is that they may have fabricated the inscription found on the coffin. Even this would have been highly hazardous, as they could scarcely tell before-hand that an unopened tomb contained two bodies, one of them a woman's.

"Why, then, are Arthurian localities comparatively rare in the district where Arthur lived and reigned? Simply, I think, because from its natural wealth, it was the object of incessant attack from the Saxons, and was conquered and partially peopled anew at an early period by a people who had no interest in perpetuating the memory of their old antagonist. It is easy to see how the story

<sup>12</sup> GALE, iii. pp. 306, 307, 326.

<sup>13</sup> BROMPTON, c. ii. 52. It is remarkable that Malmesbury dedicates his book to a Henry, Bishop of Lincoln, who cannot be identified, unless the title be a clerical error for Henry, Bishop of Winchester; and that Giraldus speaks of the search as made by Henry, afterwards Bishop of Worcester, who does not appear on any extant list of Bishops.

<sup>14</sup> *De Jur. Prin.*, pp. 191-193. *Speculum Ecclesie*, pp. 47-49.



of Arthur would be carried into Brittany by fugitives before Ine. It is more difficult, I admit, to explain how it travelled North. But it is possible that Cadwallon recruited Britons from Devon in the long and prosperous wars which he waged against the Northumbrian kings. 'Those immense forces, which nothing could resist,'<sup>15</sup> were surely not drawn altogether from North Wales; and it was a time of peace in the South, when it could well spare soldiers."

The foregoing very learned note of Mr. Pearson's contains all that, I believe, can be said in favour of Arthur as a West of England king. It will be found, however, that the supports of his theory are essentially but three in number—Gildas, Nennius, and the Mediæval writers. Let us examine the two first; the last we shall find it unnecessary specially to consider. First, as to Gildas, we must distinguish between the *History* by Gildas, and the *Life* of Gildas. The former alone is Pre-mediæval, and of an authority independent of those Mediæval legends, the truth of which we are seeking to investigate. Now the *History* gives us no certain indication whatever as to the site of the *Mons Badonicus* of Arthur's twelfth battle. For the expression, "qui prope Sabrinum ostium habetur," is an interpolation of the Durham MS. of the thirteenth century. As to the *Vita Sancti Gildæ*, as it is not older than the twelfth century, it must rank, as an authority, with Geoffrey of Monmouth, and the other Mediæval writers. And what credence we should give to them must depend on their accordance with the other earlier historical authority which we now proceed to examine.

Secondly, then, as to Nennius, Mr. Pearson's argument is here twofold. In the first place he says that the *illos* against whom Arthur fought were the *reges Cantiorum*.<sup>16</sup> And, secondly, that if we are to understand Nennius as meaning that he fought against the Saxons, then it must have been in the south, because the Teutonic invaders were in the north called Angles. As to the first argument, without pausing to remark that it would take Arthur from the south-west of England,

<sup>15</sup> BEDE, *Hist. Ecc. Lib.* iii. c. 1.

<sup>16</sup> NENNIUS, § 56, p. 47 (English Hist. Soc.).

where Mr. Pearson places him, to the south-east; it appears enough to say that, the whole passage being read, the sentence about the *reges Cantiorum* is, or, to say the least, may be meant as merely parenthetical; while the “illos, videlicet Saxones,” of the Cambridge MS. seems to settle the matter. There remains, then, but the second argument, namely that “Saxones” is applied only to the Teutonic settlers of the south of England. But remark, first, that Nennius *does* apply this term to the northern invaders. For he says that the son and brother of Hengest, and their followers, certainly as much “Saxones” as Hengest himself and his followers, occupied the “regiones quæ sunt in aquilone; juxta murum, qui vocatur Guaul.”<sup>17</sup> And this being so, remark, secondly, that Nennius could not consistently have called the northern invaders Angles or anything else but Saxons. Again, remark, thirdly, how very naturally that parenthetical sentence about the *reges Cantiorum* comes in, if we understand Nennius to mean that Arthur’s successes were against the northern Saxons. Hengest being dead, Octa, his son, came from the north to take his place in Kent; “tunc Arthur pugnabat, etc;”<sup>18</sup> then Arthur fought against the northern Saxons, and, their great leader having thus left them, the fortune of war turned in favour of the Cymry. But the main thing to be remarked here is, fourthly, that Nennius *could not* have called the Northern invaders Angles, because their first settlement in Bernicia was considerably later than the time he is speaking of, namely in 547, under Ida. And, fifthly, this becomes still further clear when we find that the earlier Teutonic settlers in the North were *Frisians*, a tribe of *Saxons*, who could not have been referred to as Angles.<sup>19</sup>

Thus it seems clear that, to say the very least, there is as little in the history of Nennius as in that of Gildas which can be held to fix the locality of the historical Arthur in the south. But it will, I think, seem also clear that when two such scholars and critics as Mr.

<sup>17</sup> NENNIVS, § 38, p. 29 (English Hist. Soc.)

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. § 56, p. 47.

<sup>19</sup> SKENE, *Early Frisian Settlements in Scotland*; and SIMPSON (Sir JAMES) *On the Catstane at Kirkliston, etc., in Proceedings of the Soc. of Antiqs. of Scotland*, v. IV.

Pearson and Mr. Skene can take diametrically opposite views as to the meaning of Nennius, who is really our only important authority, the question must, if it is to receive a definitive answer, be treated after some new method. "If not Gildas," says Mr. Pearson, "certainly Nennius may be understood as placing Arthur in the south; in the south may be found localities with names more or less nearly corresponding with those of his twelve battles; and, though the Mediæval histories may have no authority by themselves, yet in confirmation of this view of the meaning of Nennius, they are certainly of weight." Mr. Skene, on the other hand, maintains not only that the historic Arthur is the Arthur of Nennius, in which, I suppose, Mr. Pearson would agree with him, but that Nennius places him in the North; that in the North the sites of his battles may be identified; that the mythic Arthur is the Arthur of Geoffrey the writers of the twelfth century and their followers; that his story was introduced from Bretagne by Rhys ap Tewdwr in 1077, when the scene of his exploits was removed to the South; and hence, that quotations from the writers of the twelfth and subsequent centuries cannot be considered as having any logical bearing on the question.

It is in reference to this state of the discussion, that the method I have followed in the foregoing Essay may, perhaps, be held to be no immaterial contribution to the settlement of the point in dispute. That method consisted, as will be remembered, first, in examining Cymric history for a deduction as to the birthland of Arthurian Tradition; secondly, in verifying this deduction by shewing that the region thus indicated is the chief country of traditional Arthurian localities; and, thirdly, in investigating the relations of this topography. It may, indeed, be said with reference to what I have specified as conditions inimical to the importation of Arthurian traditions into the North, as to the direct indications of the North as the birthland of these traditions; and as conditions favourable to the importation of such traditions, into the South—that

our knowledge of the period is but limited. Such a reply, however, implicitly admits all that I affirm, namely, that, as far as our present knowledge goes, Cymric history points to the North rather than to the South as the country of the historical Arthur. But, whatever may be said in answer to this critical deduction, I venture to think that in the very great number of indisputably ancient traditional localities, and of, at least, highly probable historical, and poetical identifications here collected, there will be found a body of facts of which the only satisfactory explanation must be found in some such theory as that in this Essay maintained.

And I say this with the more confidence, as my general result as to Arthur would appear to be in accordance with that of my collaborateur, Mr. Nash, with respect to Merlin. Mr. Nash shows that, in the Merlin of Romance, three persons are confounded, and that the really historical Merlin was a bard of the North, in the sixth century. So, I would suggest, as I have, indeed, already hinted [CH. II. (S. III).], that in the Arthur of Romance there are confounded more persons than one, though the Arthur to whom, as an actual historical character, the traditions of the great conquering king are ultimately to be traced, was simply a sixth-century *Guledig*, or Leader of the Northern Cymry. And thus, I should hope, even Mr. Pearson, and those who think with him, may find it possible to reconcile their particular theory as to Arthur with the acceptance of the more general theory which I have sought to establish with respect to the historical origin of Arthurian Localities. With whatever modifications that theory may be held, there will, I trust, be found reasons advanced in the foregoing Essay sufficient to support the general conclusion that the chief historical basis of the mediæval Arthurian Romances is revealed to us in the Pre-mediæval history of that region which I have distinguished as Arthurian Scotland.

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EASTER, 1869.

# The Romance of Merlin.

## CHAPTER I.

### CONSULTATION OF DEVILS, AND BIRTH OF MERLIN.

Fvll wrothe and angry was the Deuell, whan that oure lorde hadde ben in helle, and had take oute Adam and Eve, and othar at his plesier; and whan the fendes sien that, they hadden right grete feer and gret merueille; thei assembleden to-gedir, and seiden, "What is he this thus vs supprisith and distroyeth, in so moche that our strengthes ne nought ellis that we haue may nought with-holde hym, nor again hym stonde in no diffence; but that he doth all that hym lyketh, we ne trowe not that eny man myght be bore of woman, but that he sholde ben oures, and he that thus vs distroyeth, how is he born in whom we [did]<sup>1</sup> knowe non erthely delyte." Than ansuerde anothir fende and seide, "He this hath distroyed that which we wende sholde haue be mooste oure a-vaile. Remembre ye not how the prophetes seiden, how that god shulde come in to erthe for to saue the synners of Adam and Eve, and we yeden bysily a-boute theym that so seiden, and dide them mooste turment of eny othir pepill, and it semed by their [feire ?]<sup>1</sup> semblant, that it greved hem but litill or nought, but they comforted hem that weren synners, and seide that oon sholde come, which sholde delyuer hem out of tharldome and disese.

[Fol. 1a.]  
Anger of the  
Devil against  
our Lord.

Assembly of  
the fiends  
and their dis-  
cussion.

The prophetes  
said that God  
should come  
on earth to  
save sinners.

<sup>1</sup> Illegible.

The Devil  
has no power  
over the bap-  
tised.

God's minis-  
ters daily  
save men  
from the  
Devil.

The great  
love of Christ  
to man.

The fiends  
must labour  
to get back  
what they  
had lost.

The fiends  
desire a man  
of their kind  
to beguile the  
people.

SO longe haue thei spoken of hym, that now is he comen,  
and hath taken from vs tham, that non othir ne myght us  
bereve; ye knoweth well that he maketh hem to ben waisschen  
in a water in the name of the fader, sone, and holy goste, and  
after that have we no powre vpon them, but yef they do turne  
[a-gain]<sup>1</sup> to vs by their euell werkis. In this wise hath he putt  
down oure power, and yet more-ouer ffor hath his mynystres lefte  
in erthe that dayly hem saueth from vs, thow; they haue don  
neuer so many of oure werkes, yef they will repent and for-sake  
their myslyvinge, and do as they teche hem that ben for the  
grete loue he hadde to man and gret tendirnesse, whan for to  
saue man he wolde come down in to erthe to be born of a  
woman, and we yede and [assaied]<sup>1</sup> hym in alle the maners that  
we cowden, and when we hadde assaied hym, and we dyd that  
[synne?]<sup>1</sup> nought fynde in hym, yet wolde he dye for to saue  
man, fful moche lovede he man when he w[olde]<sup>1</sup> suffer so  
grete payne for to haue hym a-gein, and to take hym from oure  
power. Thanne moche oughte we for to laboure with grete  
besynesse to gete agayn that he hath us be-raffte in soche wyse,  
that they may not repente ne speke with hem that myght gete  
hem pardon, and turne hem agayn ffrom our power." In this  
maner the fendes helden a gret conseil, and seide that tho that  
hadde greued hem moste that were they that tolde tydinges of  
his comyng in to erthe, and they haue don vs gret damage and  
hynderyng, and the more they tolde of his comyng, the more  
we didde hem anger and disese, and as vs semeth he hasted hym  
the ra[t]her to come for to delyuer them from our daunger. [But]<sup>2</sup>  
how myght we haue a man of oure kynde that myght speke and  
haue oure connyng and [maystrie]<sup>1</sup> worke, and haue the know-  
leche as we haue of thinges that be don and seide, and of  
thynges that be past, and that he myght be in erthe conuersant  
with these other, for witeth it wele that soche on myght moche  
helpe us to be-gile his pepill, like as the prophetes be-giled us,  
and tolden that we trowe neuer myght haue ben. In the same

<sup>1</sup> Illegible.

<sup>2</sup> Illegible, the word is *mais* in the original French.

wise sholde sithe oon telle alle thynges that were don and saide \*bothe of that is passed and of thynges that is to come, and be that sholde he be bileved of moche peple. Than thei ansuerde alle and seiden, that wele hadde he sped that soche a man myght gete, for he sholde be beleved of all thinges that he seide. Than ansuerde a-nothir fende and seide, "I have power for to sowe seede in woman, and make her conceyve, and I have oon that doth all that euer I wille; and thus vndirtoke he this enterprise to gete a man that sholde do their werkes after their alle entente. Ffull grete foles were thei whan they wende thatoure lorde sholde haue no knowynge of their ordenaunce, and enquire thus they departed from this conseille and were assented to this conclusion, and this feende that toke this enterprise ne taried not, but in al the haste that he myght, he cometh, as this woman was that wrought all his wille; and when he comethir he fonde here at his likynge, whiche yaf to hym all her part of that she hadde, and here lord was right a ryche man.

\*[Fol. 15.]

One of the fiends undertakes to make a woman conceive.

(The fiends are great fools to suppose our Lord has no knowledge of their movements.) The fiend hastes to the woman that obeys his will; her lord a rich man.

**T**his riche man hadde grete plente of bestes and of othir riches, and also he had thre daughters and a sone by this woman in whom the deuell hadde so grete power. This feende ne forgat not as he that not elles desired but hir to disceyve and to shame; and he axed of hir, "How myght I," quod he, "gete thy lord on my part;" and she ansuerde that in no maner wise lesse than he were wratthed; "and," quod she, "thow maist sone make hym wrothe, for he is right hasty." Than wente this deuell to this gode mannes bestes, and kyllid of hem grete plente; and when the heirdes sye their bestes so deyen in the feldes, thei merveyled gretly, and tolde their maister the mervelle of the moreyn, that was fallen a-monge the bestes. Whan the gode man herde this he gan to wratthe, and merveyled gretly what was cause of the moreyn; and axed of the heirdes. Quod he, "Know ye ought what thise bestes eiled thus for to dye?" And they ansuerde "Nay;" and so it passed forth all that tyme, and anon as the feende sye that the gode man was wroth for so litill, he dought that yef he dide hym

The fiend asks the woman how he can get her lord on his side.

He kills the man's beasts.

The good man begins to be wroth.

The fiend  
kills the good  
man's horses.

gretter damage, that he wolde be moche wrother, and so myght he haue hym the more atte his wille, and so he yede to x gode horse whiche that the gode man hadde, and slowe hem alle in a nyght. And when the gode man sye his gode go to so gret myschef, he gan to be angry, and seide a worde of grete ire, for he yaf to the deuell all the remenant that was lefte.

He spares no  
thing.

Strangles the  
man's son.

\*[Fol. 2a.]  
The fiend  
makes the  
woman hang  
herself.

The good  
man dies.

The fiend de-  
vises to de-  
ceive the  
man's three  
daughters.

A young man  
seduces one  
of the sisters.

And whan the deuell knewe that he<sup>1</sup> hadde youed hym soche a yefte, he was right glad, and hasted hym to do hym more damage, for he spared nothyng that he myght deuoure; and than was the gode man sorowfull and angry, and fled company of peple for hevynesse, that he was moche soell by hym self; and than wiste the deuell wele that he shulde haue his will fro thens-forth. Thanne come this feende to a feire sone that he hadde, and hym strangede in his bedde slepyng, so that on the morowe he was founden dede. Than this gode man ferde as a man out of reson for hevynesse and sorowe that he hadde loste so his sone, and fill in dispeire; and when the feende sye this he was glad, for than he hadde all his desier with-outre recouerer. \*Than wente he to the woman that hadde made hym all to wynne, and made her go up on a grete huch and tye a corde a-boute a perche, and knyt it a-boute her nekke, and made her distende fro the huch, so that she henge her-self and was strangelid to deth, and when the gode man saugh that he hadde loste bothe his sone and his wif in soche manere, he made gret doell, so that he dyed for gret sorowe and hevynesse, and thus doth the deuell to them that he may ouercome, and soche as he fyndeth at his wille; and when he hadde thus don he was right glad, and devised how he myght best disceyve the thre doughtres of this riche man whiche were lefte, and he vndir-stode wele that he myght nat disceyve them in no manere, but yef it were with som mans werke, where-in thei sholde haue delyte. And he hadde a yonge man in the town, whiche was moche disposed after his entent, and redy to inclyne to his werkes; and so he stered this man, that he come to the oon of these sustres, and thourgh

<sup>1</sup> The word "he" is inserted above the line.



the deuyles entysement, that he lay by hire. And than was the feende wele pleseth, and than wolde he neuer cesse till he hadde made it openly knowen, for to make hir vtterly shamed and stroied; ffor that tyme it was the lawe yef a woman myght be founde in fornication that she sholde, by Iustice of the lawe, be put to deth, but yef that she wolde abandone hir body to alle men as a comen woman.

A woman found in fornication to be put to death.

The man fledde a-wey, and the woman was taken and ledde be-fore the Iuges, where-of they hadde grete pite for loue of hir fader, whiche was right a worthy man, to whom weren falle many myshappes with-in shorte tyme, for he was oon of the wurshipfullest men of all the contre. Not-withstandynge they moste do hir the lawe, and so they acorded that she shulde be dolven in the erthe by nyght by cause of her frendes. In the contre was ther a gode holy man, that herde speke of this merueyle, and he com for to speke with the tow sustres that were lefte, and he come-forted hem gretely, and axed of hem this aventure was be-fallen of their fadir and modir, and of hir suster, and hire brother; and they ansuerde that thei wiste not, safe only "that god hateth vs, and suffreth vs to have this turmente." Quod the gode man, "Ye sey amysse, for god hateth no creature, but is euell pleseth, whan that synners haten hym by thaire werkes; and, ther-fore, wyte ye well that this is the encombraunce of the deuell, and wyte ye ought, what dede *your suster* hadde don, that ye haue hir loste in this wise." And they seide, "Nay." Than this holy man counselled hem to be wele ware, and kepe hem fro euell dedes, for synne draweth bothe man and woman to myshevouse ende. And so he taught and enformed hem here creaunce and feith. The elther suster vndirstode hym wele, and gretly was plesed with his doctryne, and the holy man lerned her to love god and drede god; and she peyned hir gretly to do as he hir taughte, and to contynue in gode lyvinge. And he seide to hir, "Yef ye truste that I sey vnto yow, grete gode and comfort ye shall fynde ther-[fro],<sup>1</sup> and ye shall be my doughter in god, and in what nede that euer ye haue I will not

The sister taken before the Judges,

and condemned to be buried in the earth by night. A holy man comes to the two remaining sisters.

He counsels them to keep from evil deeds.

The elder sister pleased with his doctrine.

The holy man promises to help her in her need.

<sup>1</sup> Illegible.

fayle, but I will be redy to helpe yow, and counseile yow with  
 helpe of our lord god; and dismaye yow not in no maner, but  
 trust verely in god, and often repeireth to me, for I duell not fer  
 \*hens." Thus this holy man counselled these sustres, and set  
 hem in gode wey; the eldeste yaf gode credance to this holy man,  
 and loved wele his blissed techynge, and his gode tales that he  
 tolde hem every day. When the deuell sye this, he was euell  
 plesed ther-with, and hadde grete fere to lese his labour aboute  
 them, and he dought that he myght not wynne hem by felschip  
 of man, with-oute counseile of some woman; and he hadde oon in  
 the town that ofte hadde don his wille. This woman the deuell  
 brought to these sustres, and she toke the yonger in counseill  
 and frayed her of many dyuerse thynges, and of the maner of  
 hir lyuyng. Quod she, "How doth youre suster? loueth she  
 yow wele as she ought to do?" Quod the mayden, "My suster  
 is so hevy and pensif of oure mys-happes that right seilden she  
 maketh eny mery chere to me, ne to noon other, and that maketh  
 an holy man that ofte speketh with hire, that she doth nothyng  
 but as he will." "Ha!" quod she, "euell spende ye youre  
 tyme of that feire body that ye haue, that never shull haue ioye  
 while ye be in her company." "Now, feire love," quod she,  
 "yef ye knewe what ioye other women haue ye sholde preyse  
 litill alle othir thynges; ffor we haue soche ioye when we be in  
 company of men that we loven, that yef we hadde but a mossell  
 brede, we haue more ioye and delyte than ye haue with alle the  
 delicatys of the worlde. Fye! what ioye hath a woman with-  
 oute man? Ffeire love, this I sey for yow that knowen not  
 what it is to be in mannes company, and I will telle you why:  
 youre suster is elder than ye, and so she wolde alwey holde yow  
 as her sogect, so that she myght have all, and so shold ye loose  
 youre tyme, and the ioye of youre feyre body." And answerde,  
 "How shulde I be so hardy to do as ye telle me, ffor my suster  
 ther-fore was putte to deth." Quod this othir, "Your suster dede  
 like a fooll, and hadde but sympell counseill, but yef ye will do  
 after me, ye shall haue all the delyte of youre body with-oute  
 eny lettynge." "I wote now," quod she, "ne I dar no more

\*[Fol. 2b.]

The devil  
fears to lose  
his labour.

A woman  
tempts the  
younger sis-  
ter.

She tells her  
that she  
wastes her  
time,

and that a  
woman hath  
no joy with-  
out man.

The maiden  
fears her sis-  
ter's fate.

speke with you at this tyme, for my suster; but go youre wey, and anothir tyme, we shall speke more at leyser." And when the Deuell herde this he was glad, and wiste wele he sholde haue alle his will. And when this woman was goon, the mayden be-thought her often-tymes of that she hadde seyde<sup>1</sup> vnto hire; and when the deuell sye that she spak ofte sythes so to hir-self a-lone, he put in hir mynde all that he myght, so that on a nyght she be-heilde hir fayre body, and seyde to hir-self, "Truly," quod she, "the gode woman that spake with me seyde full trewe."

She sends  
the woman  
away,

and thinks  
over what  
the woman  
had said to  
her.

**T**ho it happed on a day after that, she sente after this woman, and she com. "Truly," quod she, "ye seyde me soth that my suster set but lytill prise of me." And she ansuerde that, "I wist it wele, and yef will she haue lesse, so she haue hir owne delyte, and we be made for noon other cause, but for to haue counfort and ioie of mannes felishep." And the mayde sede, "I wolde gladly, yef I sholde not be deed ther-fore." And the olde woman seyde to hir, "Yef ye do as folily, as your syster dede, ye sholde be deed therefore, but I shall telle yow how ye shull do." Quod the mayden, "Telle on, and I will do after techynge." Quod this othir, "Ye shall abandon yow to alle men, and sey ye will no longer a-byde with youre suster, and thus shall ye haue all youre luste of youre body, ne neuer shul ye here Iustice that will speke therof to let yow; \*and thus shall ye be oute of all daunger, and euery worthy man will be glad to haue you for youre grete herytage." And the mayden graunted to do in this manere, and thus she departed from hire suster, and abandoned hire body to alle men, be the conseil of this olde woman, where-of the deuell was right gladde that he hadde brought this a-bouten.

She sends for  
the woman.

The old wo-  
man tells her  
to abandon  
herself to all  
men.

\*[Fol. 3a.]

She leaves  
hersister and  
becomes a  
common wo-  
man.

**A**nd when the elder mayden sye that hir suster was thus gon, she yede anoon to the holy man that hadde taught hir the right creauce, full hevy and pensif, makynge grete doell and sorow; and when this godeman sye her so pensif he hadde grete pitee,

The elder  
maiden goes  
to the holy  
man and tells  
him her  
grief.

<sup>1</sup> The word "seyde" is repeated twice.

and seyde to hir, "Blesse the and comaunde the to god, for I se the gretly affraied." And she ansuerde, "I have grete cause, for I haue loste my suster, that is be-come a comyn woman." And when the gode man herde this he was gretly astonyd, and seide, "The feende is full besy a-bowte yow, which will not cesse till he have disseyved the; but god be thyn helpe!" "A sir," quod she, "how may I kepe me from his disceytis? for ther is no thyng that I have so grete feire of, as that he sholde have ouer me eny power." Quod the holy man, "Yef thow wylte do after my counsell, he shall never disceyve the." "Certeyn," quod she, "I will gladly do your counsell." "Than," quod he, "belevest thow not in the fadir, sone, and holy goste, and that these thre persones be oon god in trynite, and that god com down in to erthe, and be-com man for the redemption of mannes sowle, of hem that in hym stadfastly beleve, and kepe his comaundement." And she seide, "Right as ye sey, I beleve; and so, veryly, I pray to god be my socoure and helpe." "Now than," quod he, "I pray the, and comaunde that thow kepe the fro fallynge in to grete ire or wrath, for in that the feende repaireth moste, bothe in man and woman, namly, when they be in grete ire and comberaunce; that thow haste yelde the in the graces of oure lorde and alle seyntis; and at alle tymes thow goist to bedde, or arysist, blisse the in the name of the fader, sone, and holy goste, and make upon the in the name of the crosse, on the which he suffred his passion to bye vs fro the peynes of helle. And yef thow do thus, thow shalt have no drede of the feendes power. And where that thow slepest on nyght, loke that thow have lyght, ffor the deuell hatyth all clerenesse and lyght, and gladly will not com there."

The holy man counsels her

to keep from falling into wrath;

to bless herself in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

The devil hateth light.

The maiden returns to her house.

People come to comfort her.

Thus taught the holy man the mayden, which hadde grete drede of the deuiles engynes; and so she returned hom a-geyn to her house, full stabill in the feith, and full humble to god, and to the pore people which comen vnto hir, and seiden, "Trewly, it is no wonder though ye be gretely affraied of the turment, that is falle of youre fader, and of youre moder, and youre broder and sustres, that thus be myscheved; but now taketh gode counsell,

and be of gode comfort, for ye ar right ryche, and have grete herytage; wherfore euery worthy man will be glad to have yow." And she ansuerde a-geyn, and seide, "Oure lorde kepe me in his servyse, as he knoweth it is grete nede." Thus endured she wele two yere, that the feende myght neuer be-gyle her, ne neuer myght make her do euell werke; and he sye wele, that he ne cowde nat make her lese that the holy man hadde hir lerned, lesse than she were made wroth. Than made he hir suster come on a saterday, at even, to do hir more turment and anger, to loke yef he might gete hir in that manere. And when hir suster com, it was fer with-ynne nyght; and she brought with her a grete hepe of harlotys. And when she sye her suster so come she was angry, and seide vnto here, "Ffeire suster," quod she, "as longe as ye caste yow to lede soche lyf, ye ought not to \*come in this place, for ye make me haue grete blame, wherof I have lityll nede." And she ansuerde a-geyn, as a woman that the feende was with-ynne, and seyde that she wolde yet do worse, and seide that she was more euell than she, and bar hir on-honde that she loved the holy man *paramours*, and yef it were knowen the trouthe that she worthy to be distroid. And when her suster herde this, she griped hir be the shulders, and put hir owt at the dore; and the tother, to a-unge hir, made the harlotys that come with hir to kach her suster, and bete her right euell; so with grete payne she aschaped fro them, and fledde in to her chamber, and shet her dore, and barred hit ffrom her, and the harlottis that were come with her. And she a-bode in her chamber alone, and leyde her down on her bedde all clothed, and wepte tendirly for sorowe; and when the deuell sye that she was angry, and sole by her-self, and that it was derke, he was gladde. And she remembred the myschef of hir fader and moder, and brother and sisters, and sore wepte when she hadde thought on all parteis; and so ther was grete sorowe and grete ire at hir herte. And when the feende sye that she hadde foryete that the holy man hadde taught her, he thought that she stode owte of goddes grace, and of her maister; "and now might I well put oure man in hir." And this feende, that hadde power to make

She endures well for two years.

Her sister comes to torment her,

and brings with her a heap of harlots.

The elder sister angry with her.

\*[Fol. 36.]

She reviles her elder sister,

who turns her out of doors.

The harlots beat the elder sister,

who bars herself in her chamber,

and lies down on her bed and weeps.

The devil glad at the sight;

he sees that she had forgotten what the holy man taught her.

Makes her  
conceive.  
She wakes,

and prays to  
the Virgin.

Seeks for him  
that had done  
the deed.

Deems that  
it was the  
enemy.  
Cries to the  
lord that he  
would not  
suffer her to  
be shamed.  
The fiend  
leads the  
other sister  
away.

The elder  
sister comes  
out of her  
chamber and  
goes to her  
confessor.

She tells him  
her tale;

how she was  
deceived by  
the devil.

woman conceyve, was all redy, and lay by hir, while she was slepyng; and when she hadde concayved, she awaked, and in her wakyng, she thought on the holy man, and ther-with she blissed here, and seide, "Seynt Mary, what is me be-falle, ffor I am disceyved sith I leyde me here. Now, gracyouse lady, pray vnto [thi dere]<sup>1</sup> sone that [he haue]<sup>1</sup> mercy upon me, and diffende my body fro turment of the enmy." And than she [aros, and sought aboute]<sup>1</sup> after hym that sholde haue don that dede, for she wende to haue founde hym [thar-ynne, and she]<sup>1</sup> ran to the dore, and fonde it shet in the same maner as she had barred it her self, and than she sought ouer all in her [chamber],<sup>1</sup> but nought cowde she fynde. Than she demed that it was the enmy that so hadde her begiled, and than she made full grete sorowe, and cryde moche vpon oure lorde, prayinge hym, that he wolde not suffer her to be shamed here in this w[orlde].<sup>1</sup> And anon as it was day, the feende led a-way this othir suster, for she hadde fully espleyted his purpos. And when they were alle passed, she com owte of hir chamber sorowfull and pensif, and called after her seruauant and a-noon sente after two women; and when they were come, anon she wente to hir confessour. And the gode man sye her comynge, he seide, "Thowe hest som grete nede, for I se the gretly affraied." And she answerde, "I ought wele to be affrayed, for it betyde to me that neuer fill to [eny]<sup>1</sup> woman saf oonly to me; and therfore I come to seche youre counseill, for I haue herde yow saye, that ther was neuere creature that dede so grete offence that yef he were confessed and repentant, and that he wolde resceyve penance for his trespasse, that he sholde [haue]<sup>1</sup> anon foryevenesse. Sir, I have synned, and wete ye wele I am disceyved be the deuell." [Than]<sup>1</sup> she tolde how hire [suster]<sup>1</sup> com to hir howse, and all, gynnyng and ende as ye haue herde, and how she fill on slepe [on her]<sup>1</sup> bedde, and hir dore shette and barred, and how hir grete [sorowe made hir]<sup>1</sup> for-yete to blisse hir; and, quod she, "When I a-woke I fonde me dif-foulde, and my maidenhede loste. Sir, I sought thourgh my

<sup>1</sup> The greater part of this page (fol. 3b) is nearly illegible.

chamber, and fonde my dor shet, ne I cowde fynde no lyvinge creature, that eny suche thyng myght haue don to me; for in [this]<sup>1</sup> \*wyse I have synned, wherfore I crye god mercy, and yow, and that I may have soche penance, that I lese not the lif everlastyng." The holy man lestned well to all hir confession, but he yaf no grete credence to that she seide, for he herde neuer be-fore of no soche thyng; and therfore he seyde unto hir, quod he, "Thow art fulle of the deuell; how sholde I absoyle the, or enioyne the penance for thynges which I wene thou lyst veryly, for never was ther woman that loste her maiden-hede, but she wiste by whom and how, or, at the leste, that she myght fele the man that dide the dede; and thow woldiste make me bileve this merveyle, that thow seyest in this wyse is the be-falle." And she ansuerde, "So, verily, god be my socoure in my moste nede as I have seide trouth." The holy man seide, "Yef it be so as thow haste seyde unto me, it shall verily be knowe both to the, and to me with-ynne shorte tyme. Thow hast broken the obedyence that I comaunded the, therfore I charge the in penance that alle the saterdayes while thou lyvest, that thow ete no mete but ones on the day. And as touchyng the lecherye that thow hast tolde, wher-of I can not leve the, thow oughtest to have penance all thy lyf-time, yef thow wil take soche as I shall the enioyne." And she answerde, "Ye can not charge me with noon but I will gladly perfo[r]me it." Than seyde the holy man, "Thou comest to have counseill of holy cherche, and to the mercy of oure lorde Jhesu Criste, that bought vs with his precyouse blode, and with his bitter deth; and haste very repentaunce of herte, like as thow seyest with thy mouth, and forsakeste all lechery and synne, saf only that fill in thi slepyng, fro the whiche no crature may kepe hym clene." And she graunted hym, with that he wolde be hir plegge be-fore god that she sholde be saued, and that she were not dampned for that synne.

She toke hir penance soche as he enioyned her with gode will, sore wepyng, as she that was very repentante; and this gode man assoiled hir, and yaf hir his blissyng, and sette hir

\*[Fol. 4a.]  
She asks for penance.

The holy man gives no great credence to her confession.

He tells her that she lies.

She swears that she tells the truth.

The holy man charges her in penance to eat no meat on Saturdays.

He tells her that if what she says is true, he will be her pledge before God that she shall be saved.

She takes her penance with good will.

<sup>1</sup> Illegible.

The good man brings her to the holy water,

and bids her think well on what he had charged her.

She returns to her house.

The devil angry at having lost her.

People perceive that she is with child.

Her friends ask her who is the father.

She answers that she knows not.

They do not believe her.

\*[Fol. 4b.]

She repeats her denial.

The women hold her for a fool.

She comes to her confessor, who questions her.

ageyn in the loue of god in his beste manere, and brought her to the haly water, and made her to drynke in the name of the fader, sone, and holy goste, and caste of the same water vpon her, and badde hir to thynke wele on that he hadde charged her with. "And alle tymes when thou haste eny nede, come to me ageyn." And than he be-taught hir to god; and so he put in her penaunce, alle her gode dedes and almesse and prayers that she sholde do. And so returned this damsell in to her howse, and ledde full holy lyf. And when the deuell sye that he hadde loste her in soche manere, that he wiste not what she dede, ne what she seyde, he was wroth and angry. Thus longe she abode that the seed myght no lenger ben hid whiche she hadde in hir body, so that her wombe gan to waxen grete, that the peple aperceyved wele that she was with chylde, and they that were hyr frendes, and axeden hir, be whom it was; and she answerde, so god be hir helpe, she wiste not be whom it was. Quod they, "How may this be; have ye than hadde so many men, that ye knowe not who is the fader?" And she answerde, "Gode lete me haue delyueraunce yef euer man, my witynge, hadde to do with me in soche maner." And they that this herden blessed them for merveyle, and seyde that it myght neuer be so, neythir of hir, ne of noon other, "but that ye hope to excuse hym so, that hath don the dede; but truly great pite it is of you, for as soone as the Iuges knowe ther-of, ye \*moste be deed." When she herde this she was sore abaissed, and seyde, "So veryly god make my soule safe, as I sawe hym neuer that hath don me this, ne never I hym knewe." And the women that her herde speke, helde her for a foole and yn-trewe, and clatered it aboute, and seyden certeynly that hir lewte was foule spente, seth it was loste in soche manere." And when she herde this she remembred on hir confessour, and com to hym, and tolde as the wymen hadden seide. The gode man sye that she was grete with quyk childe, and merveiled gretly, and axed hir yef she hadde wele holden hir penaunce. "Sir," quod she, "ye, with-oute fayle." Quod he, "Be-fill yowe neuer this merveyle saf ones?" "Certes, sir," quod she, "neuer be-fore ne after."



And when the gode man herde this he mervyled stronge-  
 leche, and sette the oure and the nyght in writynge,  
 like as she hadde tolde hym, and seide, "Be ye right syker, when  
 this chelde shalbe borne, I shall well knowe yef ye have made  
 eny gabbynge, and I have very trust in god, that yef it be as ye  
 have seide, ye shall not be deed ther-fore; but ye may wele haue  
 grete feer, for as soone as the Iuges knowe ther-of, they well  
 make yow to be take for couetyse of youre londes and herytage,  
 and do Iustice vpon yow; but when ye be taken, sende me worde,  
 and I shall come to helpe yow, and comforte in all that I may,  
 and wite well that god shall helpe yow, yef ye be soche as ye  
 sey." And than he seide, "Goth hom to youre howse, and have  
 no drede; and, loke ye, be of gode counfort and good lyvyng,  
 for that ledith mane and woman to gode endynge." And so she  
 departed and come to hir owne house, and ledde holyly hir lif,  
 til the Iuges made hir to be taken, and brought hir be-fore them.  
 And anon<sup>1</sup> as she was a-rested, she lete sende after the gode  
 ermyte, that hadde alwey ben her counfort, and he cam in all the  
 haste that he myght; and when he was comen he fonde that the  
 Iuges hedde brought hir by-fore them. The Iustyces clepid hym  
 to hem, and tolde hym the ansuere that she hadde seide hem, she  
 hadde never knowynge of mannes company; "and trowe ye,"  
 quod thei, "that eny woman myght haue childe with-oute  
 mannes company." The gode man ansuerid and seide, I shell  
 not sey all that I thynke, but thus moche I sey vnto yow: yef  
 ye will do my counsell, ye shall not put hir to Iugement while  
 she is with childe, till that she be deliuerd, for the childe hath  
 no deth deserved." The Iuges seiden, "We shall do as ye  
 counsele." Quod the holy ermyte, "Yef ye do by my counsele  
 ye shall put hir in a stronge tour in gode warde, wher she shall  
 haue no power ouer hir-self; and with hir ye shall put two  
 women ffor to helpe hir at hir delyueraunce when tyme is, in  
 soche maner that thei may not com oute no more. And thus  
 shell she be lefte tell she haue chelde, and lete hir aftur be kepte

The good  
man sets  
down her  
statement in  
writing.

He tells her  
what the  
judges will  
do to her.

Tells her to  
go home and  
have no fear.

The judges  
make her to  
be brought  
before them.  
She sends for  
the hermit,

who is ques-  
tioned by the  
judges.

He counsels  
them not to  
put her to  
judgment  
until she is  
delivered of  
the child.

He also coun-  
sels them to  
put her into  
a strong  
tower with  
two women  
to help her,

<sup>1</sup> The word is written "a nono."

to be left  
there till she  
is strong  
enough to go  
by herself.

She is shut  
in a strong  
tower.

\*[Fol. 5a.]

The good  
man tells her  
to have the  
child bap-  
tized directly  
it is born,  
and to send  
for him when  
she is  
brought to  
judgment  
again.  
She is de-  
livered of a  
son.  
The child has  
the wit of a  
fiend.  
Our Lord  
takes it to his  
own use on  
account of  
the repent-  
ance of the  
mother.  
The devil  
loses his pur-  
pose.

Our Lord  
would have  
the child, but  
gives him  
free choice to  
do what he  
would.

The women  
afraid of the  
child because  
he is rough.

The mother's  
fear at sight  
of the child.  
She tells  
them to let  
it out of the  
window to be  
baptised.

tyll she be stronge to goo by her-self. And then yef ye se none other thyng be her then ye se now, than do the Iustice as ye seme right. Thus shall ye do now be my rede; and yef<sup>1</sup> ye do othirwise I may no more." And even as the gode man deuised, they dede. And so she was shet in a stronge tour, and with her two women, the wiseste that they knewe of soche mystere, and made hem a wyndowe to hale vpe, that hem owȝt to have.

\*When this was don the gode man spake to hem be-nethe on the grounde with-oute, and seyde to the damesell, "When thow haste childe," quod he, "make it to be baptiseth as soone as thow mayste; and when thow shalte be brought oute ageyn to Iugement lete me have wetyng." In this wyse abode they stille in the tour a grete while, til that she was delyuered of a sone, as god wolde. And when he was born it hadde the engyne and the witt of a feende, after the kynde of hym that be-gate hym. But the deuell wrought so folily, that oure lorde toke it to his owne vse, be the very repentance of the modir, that hir put in the mercy and ordenaunce of god and holicherche, and hilde wele the doctryne of his mynystres; and, therfore oure lorde wolde not lese that shulde be his. And ther the deuell was disseyued of his purpos, that he hadde ordeyned that childe to haue his arte and witte to knowe alle thynges don, and seide, bothe that were paste and that were to come. And oure lorde, that alle thynges knoweth, sye the repentaunce of the moder, and that it was not her will that was so be-fellen, he wolde have hym on his parte; neuertheles, he yaf hym fre choys to do what he wolde, for yef he wolde he myght yelde god his parte, en to the feende his also.

**T**his was this childe born, of whom the women were sore afeerde, for they sye hym more roughe than other children that they had seyne, and so they shewed to the moder, and when she it sough, she fayned her, and sayd, "This childe maketh me to haue grete feer." Quod the women, "So doth it to vs." Quoth the moder, "Let it be let don owte at the wyndowe that it may be baptysed," and they dyd soo. "What shalbe his

<sup>1</sup> The two words "and yef" are here repeated.

name?" "I will," quod she, "that it haue name after my fader." Then they let it down by a corde owte at the wyndowe of the tour, and cherged hem that weren be-nethe, that it shulde be baptysed, and named after the gode man that was fader of the modre, and so it was<sup>1</sup> cristened Merlyn, and was delyuered to the<sup>2</sup> women vpe to the wyndowe to the moder, and ther was none othir women that durste norishe it but the modre, for it was so grylsly to syght, and therfore was the moder suffred to norishe it tell it was x monthes of age, and<sup>3</sup> than it semed ij yere age or more; and whan it was xij monthes of age, the women seide to the modre, "Dame, we will no lengar be here in this case from oure frendes; we will gone owte, for we have be here longe tyme." Then quod she, "As sone as ye departe from hens shall I be brought to Iugement." Quod they, "We may no more be here-ynne, and therefor we ne may no more do therto." Then she wepte and cryde hem mercy, praynge hem to abyde a while, and they graunted hir; and as they lened lokyng oute at the wyndowe ther as she satte sore wepyng, toke the child in her armes, sayinge, "Feyre sone, for youre sake shall I suffir the deth, and I haue it not deserued, for ther is noon, saf oonly God, that<sup>4</sup> knowith the trowthe, and I may not be byleved, wherfore I most with grete wronge be put to deth." And as she made this lamentacion, the chede gan to be-holde hir, and seyde, \**"Moder,"* quod he, "be not dismayed, for ye shull neuer be Iuged to deth for my cause." And when the moder herde this ansuere she aferid, that as she sodenly made a spryng, the childe fill oute of hirs arme and cryde. The wemen that were at the wyndowe wenden that she hadde ben a-boute to kylle the childe, and sodeynly axed hir, "Whi made the childe this shrike? wilt thou sleue it?" And she ansuerde, "I thought it neuer, but it was for a merveyle that it seide vnto me." Quod she, "It seyde I sholde neuer be deed for hym." Than, quod thei, "We shull heire hym sey othir thynges." Than they toke

It is christened Merlyn.  
Is brought up to the window.  
No one but its mother durst nourish it because it is so grisly.

The women will stay no longer.

She prays them to abide awhile with her.

She weeps and talks to the child in her arms.

\*[Fol. 5b.]

The child tells her she shall not die for him.  
The mother afraid and springs up, letting the child fall.  
The women think she had tried to kill the child.

She tells them what it said to her.

<sup>1</sup> The words "and so was it" are repeated.

<sup>2</sup> The word "and" is repeated.

<sup>3</sup> The word "the" is repeated.

<sup>4</sup> The word "that" is repeated.

They try to  
make it speak  
to them.

The mother  
tells them to  
menace her.

The women  
call the child  
a foul crea-  
ture.  
He tells them  
they lie.

They say he  
is no child,  
but a devil.

He will speak  
no more.

They go to  
the window  
and tell the  
people be-  
neath.

The tidings  
come to the  
judges,

who order  
her to be  
brought be-  
fore them.

she sends to  
the hermit.

she makes  
great lamen-  
tation.

The women  
tell the child  
that he does  
not care for  
his mother.  
He tells his  
mother not  
to fear.

The women  
say he will  
be a wise  
man.

They are  
taken out of  
the tower.

the childe and cherishid it, prayinge to speke to hem; but for ought thei cowde do thei myght gete of hym no mo wordes, till on a tyme the modir seyde to the wemen, quod she, "Manace me, and sey I shalbe brente," for fayne wolde she that the wemen herde it speke. The wemen seyde to the moder, "Truly it is grete damage and pite that youre fayre body shalbe brent for so foule a creature; better it were that he hadde neuer be borne." "Certes," quod he, "falsly lyen, and that hath my moder made yow to sey." And when they herde this they were sore abaissed, and seiden, "Certes, this is no childe, but it is a deuell, who myght this have knowen that he hath seide." Than they axed hym many demaundes, but he wolde speke no more, saf he seide, "Let me be, and beth in pes, for ye ben more synfull than is my moder." And when they hadde herde this they hadden grete merveyle, and seide, "This may not be kepte counsell, ne it ought not not to be, and therfore we will telle it to the peple be-nethe with-oute forth." Tho wente they to the wyndowe and clepeden to the peple, and tolde them this merveyle of the childe, In so moche that these tydinges com to the Iuges, and thei hadde ther-of grete merveile, and seide it was tyme to do Iustice vpon the moder. Thei sente to the baile that with-ynne xl dayes she sholde be brought be-fore them to have her Iugement. When the moder of Merlin knewe that hir daye was come she hadde grete feer, and sent worde to the gode hermyte, hir confessour.

Thus she abode viij dayes or more, till the tyme com that she sholde be brent. Whan she remembred hir on hir deth she made grete lamentacion for grete drede. The childe wente a-boute in the tour and sye his moder wepynge, and he lowgh and was mery. The wemen that this be-heilde seide, "Thow thynekst full lityll on thi moders grete sorowe, that this weke for the shall be brente." To this worde ansuerde the childe, "Feire moder, be not afeirde, for while I leue shall noon be so hardy to putt yow to deth, saf ononly god that is Almyghty." When the wemen herde this they seiden, "This childe shall ben a wise man and a wonderfull." And when the day com that was sette, the wemen were taken oute of the tour, and she bar

hir sone in hir armes. The Iuges were come, and toke the two women in counseill, and axed yef it were trewe that the childe hadde seyde soche wordes; and they seiden like as they hadden herde. And the Iuges seiden he moste be connyng of moche thyng, yef he shulde saue his moder; and the gode hermyte was come to conforte the moder; and oone of Iuges seide to hir, "Dame, make yow redy, for ye moste suffir this martire of deth." And she ansuerde prayinge she myght speke with hir confessour; and they yaf hir lycence. And they entred in to a chamber and lefte hir childe with-oute, and the peple a-resoned it with many questyons, but he yaf noon ansuere. \*The moder spake with hir confessour, pitofly wepyng; and when she hadde seyde all that she wolde the gode man axed yef hir childe spake, and she seide, "Ye." "Certes," quod the gode man, "therof shall come merveiles." Than thei come oute be-fore the Iuges; the damsell was in hir smok, with a mantill a-bouten hir, and fonde hir son with-oute the chamber, and toke hym in her armes, and stode still. And the Iuges examyned hyr who was the fader of the childe; and she ansuerde, "I knowe well I go to my deth, and so god have mercy and pyte on my soule, as I never knewe the fader, ne neuer hym saugh, ne neuer erthely man hadde I of knowleche, wherthourgh I sholde have childe." The Iuges seide, "We may neuere bileve that this be trewe that thow seiste." Than the Iuges drough hem apart, and cleped these other wemen, and seide, "Dames, be-fill it euer to yow, or to eny othir woman that ye herde of speke, that myght have childe with-owte carnall knowyng of man." And those seyde, "With-oute manes feliship myght no woman have chylde." Than the Iuge turned to this damesell, and tolde how those wemen hadde seide, "and, therefore, it is grete reson that we do Iustice vpon yow." Then Merlyn sprong oute of his mothers [arm]<sup>1</sup> angrye, and saide to<sup>2</sup> the Iuge, "It is no right that she be deed, for she hath it not deserued; and yf other shulde be don Iustice vpon all tho that don avouterie be-syde ther housbands, many there were werthy to be

The judges ask the women if the child had spoken.

One of the judges tells the mother to prepare for death. She speaks with her confessor. The people ask the child questions. \*[Fol. 6a.]

The good man asks whether the child spoke.

The judges examine the damsell.

They will not believe what she says.

They ask the women if it can be true.

The judge tells the damsell what the women had said.

Merlin pleads for his mother.

<sup>1</sup> In the MS. the word here is "pnd."

<sup>2</sup> The word "to" is repeated.

The judges  
examine the  
hermit.

The child  
says to the  
hermit, "Ye  
have the  
hour when I  
was con-  
ceived."  
The good  
man answers.

The child  
tells the  
judge he  
knows his  
father better  
than the  
judge does  
his,

and that the  
judge's mo-  
ther better  
deserves the  
death than  
his mother.  
The judge is  
right wrath.

Merlin tells  
him that he  
shall have no  
power over  
his mother.

\*[Fol. 65.]

The judge  
sends for his  
mother.

Merlin and  
his mother  
kept close.

brent. And as touchynge this that is putte on my moder, she is nothyng gilty; reinde of that gode man yef ye charge hym to say the trouthe." Then the Iuges examyned the gode hermyte yef it were so, and he seide, "Ye," as by his wetyng, and he told hem how she was begiled in her slepe, and that she neuer sedd hym that dide the deed, "ne I never hym sygh, wherfore al that aperteyneth to god I take vpon me for hir; nevertheless, I herde never of no soche merveyle, safe only of this." Than seide the child, "Ye have the houre and the tyme written that I was ynne conceyved, and ther-by may you knowe yef my mother sey troath." The gode man ansuerde, "Thow seist soth, ne I wot not how thow myght knowe this." Than were the women cleped which tolde the hour of the chilles berthe, and so was the gode mannes writyng fonde trewe; and the Iuge seide, "For al that she sholde not go quyte."

Thane wrathed the childe, and saide, "I know better my fader than thow doste thyn, and thy moder wiste beter whom is thy fader, than my moder knotheth mynne." Thane wrathed the Iuge, and seide, "Yef thow censt ought say of my moder, sey on." Quoth the child, "I cowde sey so moche be thy moder, that she hath beter deserved the deth then hath my moder, therefore yef that thove me; leet my moder be in pese that natht knoweth of that thow putttest on hir in thy Inngendure." Tho gan the Iuge to be right wrath, and seyde, "Yef thow canste do so, then haste reserwed thy moder fro brennyng; but, wyth thow well, yef thow canste not prewe this vpon hir, I shall brenne bothe the and thy moder to-gedere." "That shall neuer be while I lyfe," quoth Merlyn, "that thow shall have no powre overene my moder." This was Merlyn's pletere for his moder.

\*Thow was respite take to the v<sup>e</sup> day, and the Iuge lete sende after his moder; and of many folke was the childe a-resonde of diuirse thyng, and of his moder also; but in alle the v. dayes myght ne creature gete of no worde. And when the Iuges moder was come, Merlyn and his moder were brought owte of prison, and ledde be-fore peple. Tho seide the Iuge to

Merlyn, "Lo, here is my moder on whom thow most sey that that thow hast promysed." Tho ansuerde, "Thow art nbt so wyse as thow weneste; go, brynge thy moder in to a prevy chamber, and take with yow of youre frendes that ye beste truste. And I shall the counseill of my moder, that is, god almyghty and hir confessour." Tho was the Iuge so a-baishshed that vnethe cowde he ansuere eny worde; but he understode that the chylde spake wisely. And Merlyn axed alle the peple, "Yef I deliyuer my moder fro this Iuge, shall eny other do her duress?" And they seiden all, "Nay." When they weren in the chamber the Iuge axed of Merlyn, "Now sey of my moder that thow owest to sey, wherby thy moder may be quyte." The chylde ansuerde, "I shall neuer sey thyng of thy moder wherefore my moder ought to be quyte, for she hath no thyng agaylte, ne I will in no maner diffende my moder a-geyn right; but I will saue goddis right and hers; and yef thow do wisely lete my moder be in pees, and reste with-oute more, *and* I shall lete youre." "So shalte thow nought escape," quod the Iuge. Quod Merlyn, "Thow haste quyte clayned my moder, yef I may hir deffende in this maner." Quod the Iuge, "It is soth." "Than accusest my moder," quod merlyn, "be-cause I am of hir born, and she knoweth not who that me be-gat on hir; but yef I wolde she shulde better be-knowe who be-gat me than thow knowest who is thy fader, and thy moder can better telle the whos sone thow art than my moder can telle me whos sone I am." "Moder," quod the Iuge, "how is this; am I not the sone of youre hosebonde." "O feyre sone," quod she, "whos sone shuldest thow be but my lordes, whiche is now deed." "Dame," quod Merlyn, "thow muste sey trouthe, for elles thy sone holdeth not my moder ne me yet quite." Quod the Iuge, "I will neuer entermete ther-in." Quod Merlyn, "Thow shalt yet fynde that thi fader is yet lyvinge by witnesse of thy moder." The chylde be-heild the moder of the Iuge, and seyde, "Dame, thow moste sey truthe. Who is his fader, for it is not he that he weneth." The lady was al abaishshed, and axed hym "who than?" "Thow woste well," quod Merlyn, "that he is the

The judge shows Merlin his mother.

Merlin says, "Bring thy mother into a privy chamber."

He speaks to the people.

The judge asks Merlin to say what he has against his mother. The child answers him,

and defends his mother.

The judge asks his mother whose son he is.

Merlin commands her to tell the truth.

She is abashed.

Merlin tells her who is the judge's father.

sone to person be this tokene, that a-noon as he hadde leye by the, thow toldest hym thow were with childe, and he seyde a-geyn that thow sholdest neuer be with childe by hym, and that seyde he for feer, leste thow shuldest have leyen by eny other man; and, therfore, lest he not, but he putte in writyng alle the tymes that he lay by the. And that tyme thyn hosbonde and thow were at debate; and with-in shorte tyme thow toldest the person that thow were euel ther-on, for thow wast with childe with hym. Is not this trewe? but yef thou knowliche the soth I will other sey werse." The Iuge axed of his moder "Is this trewe?" And she seide, "Feire sone, levest thou this deuell." Than seide \*Merlyn, "When thow knewe verily that thow were with childe, thow purchacest a-corde be-twene the and thi husbonde, by mene of the person hym-self, for to hyde youre counseill; and this lif leddest longe after, and yet thow doest. And that same nyght, when thow sholde come hiderwarde, layes thow by hym, and he brought the on wey hiderwarde a grete part, and seide, 'Thynke to do and to sey as my sone will.'"

The judge asks her if this is true.

\*[Fol. 7a.]

Merlin tells her what she has done.

The judge's mother, hearing what he says, is distraught.

When the Iuges moder herde this that he so spake, and wiste wele he seyde soth in all thinges, she was sore distraught, and sye wele she moste be-knowe the trouthe; and hir sone be-heilde hir and seide, "Feire moder, who-euer be my fader, I am youre sone, and as youre sone I will do; sey me trouthe of that he this hath seyde." "Now, feire sone," quod she, "I cry yow mercy, for that he hath seide it is trewe." Quod the Iuge, "This childe soth seide when he seyde that he knewe beter his fader than I dede myn, and therfore it is no reson I do Iustise on his moder; but for godes sake and for my worship," quo he to Merlyn, "telle me who is thy fader." And he ansuerde, "I shall rather telle the for thy love than for thy force. I will that thow wyte verily that I am the sone of the enmy that begiled my moder with engyn, and their repair is in the air. And wite well that I have their witte and connyng and mynde. And by this I knowe thi moders werkes, for I knowe alle thynges that be don or seyde and tho be passed. And oure lorde that wolde I sholde be saued,

She acknowledges the truth.

The judge asks Merlin who is his father.

Merlin tells him his father is in the air,



and be on his part a-geyn my nature, for the love of my moder, that bothe with body and herte dide trewe penaunce that this gode man charged hir with, by vertu of the auctorite that he hath of the chirche, so that I knowe thynges that be for to come a grete partye, and that may ye knowe be that I shall sey yow." Than he toke the Iuge a-part, and said, "Thi moder will a-noon go telle hym that the by-gat all that I have seide, and when he hereth this he will fle for feer of the, and the deuell, whom he hath euer servid, shall lede hym to a water ther to drowne hym-self; and so mayste thou prove that I knowe thynges that be to come." "Yef this be so," quod the Iuge, "neuer shall I mystrowe the."

and that our Lord wished him to be saved for his mother's sake.

He takes the judge aside, and tells him that his mother's paramour will drowne himself.

Thus departed this counsell and come be-fore the peple, and the Iuge seide well he hadde delyuered his moder fro brennyng be gode reson. And be it well knowe to yow alle that neuer was seyen so wyse a man. And they ansuerde, "Blessed be oure lorde that she is quyt fro the deth." Thus delyuerid Merlyn his moder, and a-bode with the Iuge, and the Iuge sente iij men with his moder to witte yef it were trewe that the childe hadde seyde; and a-noon as the Iuges moder was com hom she tolde the person the merveylye that she hadde herde. And when herde that, he was so astonyed that he kowde ansuere no worde, supposynge that a-noon as the Iuge were come he wolde sle hym, and so he spedde hym oute of the town till he com to a ryver, and seyde to hym-self that better it were ther to drowne hym-self than the Iuge sholde hym shamfully do hym to deth be-fore the peple. Thus ledde hym the devell that he hadde serued, that he hadde lepte in to the ryver and drowned hym-self. And that saw they that were sent with the lady. And when they were returned they tolde the Iuge, and hadde grete merveylye, and seyde vnto Merlyn this thyng, and Merlyn lowgh. "I pray the," quod he, "tellith to Blase my moders confessour." The Iuge tolde the gode man the merveylye that was be-falle of the person. Than wente Merlyn and his moder, \*and Blase and the Iuge where as they liked. This Blase was a nobill clerk and subtil, and herde Merlyn speke sotilly as of his age, as he that

The judge tells the people that the child had delivered his mother by good reason.

The judge's mother tells the parson,

who drowns himself.

They tell the judge, who marvels greatly.

\*[Fol. 75.]

Blase discourses with Merlin.

Merlin tells him to believe what he says.

Blase fears he will deceive him.

Merlin says that the evil and the good are mixed.

It is God's will that the devil should lose his part in him.

If he had been born of an evil woman, he would have had no power of God.

Merlin asks Blase to make a book of what he tells him.

Blase makes him promise not to beguile him.

Merlin promises him.

Blase gets his writing materials.

was but two yere olde and an half, and he *merveylede* gretely where-of his grete wytte myght come, and he assaide Merlyn in many maners; and Merlyn seyde, "The more thow assayest me the more shalt thow fynde; but do and beleve that I shall sey, and I shall lyghtly teche the to haue the love of Ihesu Cryste and the lyf euer-lastynge." Blase ansuerde, "I have herde the sey, and I leve well that thow art the sone of the Deuell; wherefore I doute the sore, lest thow me disceyve and be-gyle." "Hit is a custome," quod Merlyn, "that alle shrewed hertys gon in alle their afferes, as well the euell as the gode, euen as thow hast herde me sey that I was conceyved of the deuell, so haste thow herde me sey that god hath yove me mynde to knowe thynges that be to come; and wyte thow well that it is godes will that I sholde knowe it, for he wolde that the deuell shold lese his part in me; but I have not loste the knowynge of here engynes, but I holde of hem that I ought to conne; but they ne shole therby take *profyte*, for they haue fro henes-forth loste ther trauayle, for they putt me in so digne a vessell, the whiche ne ought not to be theirs; but yef they hadden putt me in an euell woman I sholde haue hadde no power to have knowen what god had I be; therefore leve that I sey vnto the. And I shall telle the soche thynges that thow woldest trowe no creature myght sey vnto the; and therfore make a boke, and alle tho thate this boke shul se, sholde the rather kepe hem from synne." Blase ansuerde and seide, "The boke I will gladly make; but I coniure the in the name of the fader, sone, and holy goste that thow have no power me to be-gyle, ne to make me do soche thyng that god sholde with be displesed." "Alle these thynges," quod Merlyn, "ne mowe the hynder in body, ne in sowle, for never shall I make the do thyng that shalbe ageyn the volente of oure lord Ihesu Cryste." "Than sey what thow wilt, and fro hens-forth I will do it gladly." Quod he, "Gete ynke and parchemyn, and all that longeth to writynge, and than I will telle the."

Blase sought all that hym mystered to write with, and when he was all redy, Merlyn be-gan to telle the lovyng of Ihesu

Criste, and of Iosep Abaramathie, like as they hadden ben of the slayn; and of Pieron, and of othir felowes like as they weren departed, and the fynyshment of Ioseph and of alle other. And after he tolde hym that whan alle thise thynges were don, how the deuelles toke theire counseile of that they hadde loste their power that they were wonte to haue over man *and* woman, and how the prophetes hadden hyndred here purpos, and how they were acorded to purchase a man, that sholde have their witte and mynde to disceyve the peple. And thow hast herde be my moder, and also be other, the trauayle that they hadden to begete me; but through theire foly, they alle loste their trauayle."

Merlin tells of the love of Christ, and of Joseph of Arimathea.

The devils took counsel of what they had lost;

how they lost their travail.

## CHAPTER II.

### KING VORTIGER AND HIS TOWER.

Thus devised Merlyn this boke, and made Blase to write it, which hadde ther-of so grete *merveille* that he wolde not telle it to no persone, and alwey hym thought that \*his tales weren gode, and therefore he herkened hem gladly. In the mene-tyme that they entended a-boute this mater, come Merlyn to Blase, and seyde, "Thow moste have grete *traueyle* a-boute the makyng, and so shall I have moche more." And Blase axed, "How?" Merlyn seyde, "I shall be sente after to seche oute of the weste, and they that shall come to seche me, have *grawnted* their lorde that they shull me sle, but whan thei come and here me speke they shull have no will me to sle. And I shall go with hem; and thow shalt go in to that *partyes*, where they be that have the holy vessell. And euer here-after shall thy boke gladly be herde, and he that will knowe the lyf of kynges whiche were in the grete Bretayne be-fore that cristendom come, be-holde the story of Bretons. That is a boke that maister Martyn *traunslated* oute of latyn, but heire rested this matere. And turneth to the storye of Loth, a crysten kynge in Bretayne,

Blase writes the book, but tells no one.

\*[Pol. 8a.]

Merlin says that they will seek him out to slay him,

and that Blase shall go after the holy vessel.

The story of Bretons, translated by Master Martyn.

The three  
sons of Con-  
stance.

Vortiger, a  
worldly-wise  
man.

Moyne, the  
eldest son of  
Constance,  
made king.

Vortiger  
chosen stew-  
ard.

He has the  
hearts of the  
people.

The king  
comes to him  
to ask for his  
help, but he  
will not give  
it.

The heathen  
discomfyt the  
king.

The people  
begin to hate  
him.

The barons  
come to Vor-  
tiger to re-  
quest him to  
be king.

He will not,  
because the  
king is alive.  
\*[Fol. 88.]

whos name was Constance. This Constance regned a grete tyme, and hadde thre sones, the first hight Moyne, and the other Pen-dragon, and the thirde Vter. This Constans hadde a man in his realme that hight Vortiger; this Vortiger was a worldly wise man, and Constance was a man of grete age, and ended his lif. Tho the pepill axed who sholde be her kynge and here lorde; they acorded to make Moyne kynge, that was eldest, for it was not right that noon other sholde be by-fore hym. Heir-to accorded Vortiger hym-self, and the barons chosen Vortiger to be stwarde. And the hethen peple that werreden on the kynge Moyne often sithes foughten withe the crystene. And Vortiger dide with all the realme his wille, that the kynge that was yonge ne hadde but the krowne. So hadde Vortiger the hertys of the peple, and he knewe well that thei heilde hym worthy and wise, and lyfte hym to grete pride, for he sye ther was noon in the londe that myght do so moche as he. The hethen assembled a grete oste vpon hem, and the kynge com to Vortiger, and seide, "Gode frende, helpe to diffende the lande, for I and alle the peple be at thy comaundement." And Vortiger seyde, "Sir, ther is moche peple in youre londe that me haten, therefore lete them helpe yow, for I will not entermete me ther-of.

When the kynge and thise other sye that ther was noon helpe in hym, ne socour, they returned, and arayed hem, and made hem redy to fyght, but they were disconfited of the hethen peple; and than they returned, and complayned here grete losse, and seyden yef Vortiger hadde be ther, they hadde not so mys-happed. So be-gan the peple to hate the kynge. Thus it indured longe tyme, tyll that the kynge was holden a cowarde; and alle the barons seiden thei wolde no longer suffer hym to be kynge. Than come they to Vortiger, and seide, "Sir, we ben kynges, for he that we have is nought worth; for goddes sake take it upon yow, and mayntene vs, for ther is noon in this londe that may so well as ye." And he ansuerde, "I may not, ne I ought not to do while the kynge leveth." "Truly," quod they, "better it were for vs that he were ded than a-lyve." "Yef he were ded," quod Vortiger, "than yef ye and other wolde assent,

I wolde be youre kynge." When thei herde these words, supposed wele what he ment. Thei toke leve of hym, and yede in to their contreyes, and tolde their frendes the ansuere of Vortiger, and thei seide, "It were beste for vs to sle hym, and than may Vortiger knowe that he is kynge thourgh oure helpe, be that we have slayn the kynge; and so shall he euer after do oure wille, and be oure frende. And so xij made hem redy, and wente in to the halle ther the kynge was, and ran on hym with swerdes and knyves, and slowe hym. And thei fonde but ffewe that a-geyn hem seide to make resistance. Tho they com to Vortiger, and seiden, "Now shalt thou be kynge, for we have slayn kynge Moyne." When Vortiger wiste he was ded, he made semblaunt as he hadde be right wroth, and seide, "Full euell have ye sped that thus have slayn youre kynge. I rede you to fle out of the londe for drede of the kynges peple, and me forthynketh that ye be hider i-come." And thei anon departed thens, and thus was kynge Moyn slayn. After, the peple of the Contre assembleden, and speken of Vortiger; and so thei acorded to haue Vortiger kynge. At this counseill were two noble men that kepten the two childeren which were b[r]etheren to kynge Moyn, that was Pendragon and Vter.

Twelve of the barons slay the king.

Vortiger pretends to be angry with them.

The people assemble and make him king.

The two noblemen who had the care of Pendragon and Uter agree to fly to Gaul.

When these tow gode men wisten that Vortiger sholde be kynge, thei denied wele that thourgh hym was kynge Moyn slayne, thei toke consell be-twene hem bothe, and seide, "Sithe that Vortiger hath do sle oure kynge, lete vs now kepe the two children, for we loued moche the fader, that to vs did many benefetes, and be hym haue we yet all that we haue. Gretly were we to blame yef we loste that we haue so longe kepte. Than the two gode men acorded that they wolde fle in to a straunge contre towarde Gawle, and lede with hem the two children that they hadde so longe tyme kepte. But at this tyme I will not sey where thei be come till tyme of the tale come ther-to; but thus moche I sey yow, that in a Citee that is called Ben-oyc,<sup>1</sup> that now is cleped

They are assisted at Ben-oyc, now called Bourges.

<sup>1</sup> The MS. scratched here.

Bourges, were thei longe tyme norished. And so may ye vnderstande be this tale that he ought doth for a gode man, lesith not his traueyle.

Vortiger pretends not to know the assassins of Moyne.

When Vortiger was chosen to be kynge, and he was saered, and lorde of londe, thei that hadde slayn the kynge Moyne come be-fore hym. And when he hem saugh, he made semblaunt as he hadde neuer seye them be-fore. And thei reproved hym of vnkyndenesse, and seyde thourgh them he was chosen to be kynge, for his love hadde thei slayn kynge Moyn. When Vortiger herde hem seye thei hadde slayn their lorde, he comaunded to take them; and seide, "Ye have Iuged youre-self that knowliche that ye have youre lorde slayn. In the self manere sholde ye do to me yef ye myght; but I shall make yow well to be kepte." And when thei vndirstode this, they were sore abasshed, and seiden, "Sir, we trowed to deserue of yow thanke." Than Vortiger made hem to be bounde to horse tailes, and made hem to be rente and drawen a-sonder, alle xij, while eny hym wolde holde with other. Thise that thus were distrowed were come of grete lynage; they come to Vortiger, and seide, "Thow hast don \*vs grete shame, that haste putte oure frendes to so vileyns deth; we will never gladly do the servise."

He orders them to be drawn a-sonder.

Their friends menace Vortiger.

\*[Fol. 9a.]

Vortiger tells them he will do the same to them if they speak any more.

When Vortiger herde their manasyng, he was wroth and angry, and seide yef they spake eny more ther-of he sholde do the same with hem. And they hadde grete despite of that worde, and ansuerde as thei that litll him douted. "Thow manesest vs as thow wylte, but while we have eny londe, or kyn, or frendes, shalt thow neuer be with-oute werre; for thow art not oure lorde be right, ne the londe is not thyn, but that thow haste a-geyn all reson; and wite þou wele that thow shalt dye the same deth that thow hast made hem." And thus they departed with-oute more at that tyme. In this manere be-gan the euclwill be-twene the kynge and the barons, so that thei assembled grete pepill vpon the kynge, and did hym grete harme, and token often prisoners, and many other prayes vpon hym. In this maner hadde Vortiger werre longe tyme, and often tyme faught so with them that he drof hem oute of hys londe.

They threaten him with continual war.

Vortiger, after much war, drives them out of the land, and

And when he hadde dryuen hem oute, he be-come so crewell to his peple that thei myght no lenger hym suffer, but a-roos a-geyn hym, and refte hym grete part of his londe, and stuffed their forterresses. When Vortiger sye that, he was ferde to lese his londe. Than he sente Messages to the Danes that were hethen peple, and seide he wolde have pees with hem. When thei wiste that Vortiger disered the pees, they were gladdes. Than com Angier to Vortiger, and serued hym trewly till he hadde made ende of his werre. Than Angiers spake so with Vortiger, that he toke oone of Angiers doughters to his wyf. Wher-thourgh the peple seyde he loste grete parte of beleve for his wif that was not crysten. After all this Vortiger knewe wele that he hadde not the hertys of the peple; and also the sones of Constance were fledde in to *straunge* londes, and that thei wolde repeire as sone as thei myght; and knewe well also yef they come a-geyn it sholde be to hym grete damage; and therfore he thought to make a Castell so stronge and so large, that he sholde not drede no werre. Tho lete he sende after alle the masons and werke-men of his londe, and comaunded hem to make a tour, the strengest that myght be devised in eny maner, and than did to brynge ston and morter, and be-gan the werke. And when thei hadde wrought a iiij fadome of height, than it ouerthrewe, and the mounstayne that the werke was sette on gan to tremble, that thei semed it wolde synke. And he seide for that wolde he not yet cesse, but make it vp a-geyn. Thus thei wrought dyuerse tymes, and euer it fill and trymbled. When Vortiger sye his werke myght not holde, he seide he sholde neuer have ioie till he myght knowe what was the cause that it fill. Than he sente after alle the wisest men of his londe. And when thei were come he tolde hem the *merveyle* of his toure, and axed theyre counseile. And thei seide ther myght noon knowe the cause why, but it were notable clerkes; "ffor thei can knowe many thinges be force of clergie that we ne can no skyle on." Than seide Vortiger, "Me thinke ye sey soth." He lete sende after alle the wise clerkes of his londe, and tolde hem how his toure fill, wher-of they gretly *merveiled*. Than he toke oon of the

becomes very cruel.

He sends messages to the Danes for peace.

Angier comes to Vortiger and serves him truly. Vortiger marries one of Angier's daughters.

He fears the sones of Constance.

He thinks to make a strong castle.

It is overthrown, and the mountain on which it was set trembles.

He has it rebuilt several times.

He sends for the wisest men to tell the cause of his tower falling.

He then sends for the wise clerks.

wisest of hem, and axed hym yef he trowed they cowde telle why his werke myght not stonde.<sup>1</sup> "Do me to wete that ye can telle the cause why?" And when thei herden this, they seide, "Sir, \*we witeth not; but ther be somme that myght wele knowe by astronomye." "Than," quod he, "enquereth a-monge you who will take the labour to serche oute the cause why, and lete me wite." Than enquired oon of a-nother yef ther were eny that cowde of that art. So ther were two that seiden thei cowde i-nough as hem semed. Thise tweyne chosen to hem of hir othir felischep, that thei were vij in nombre. And they were brought be-fore the kynge, and he axed, "Shull ye tell me thencheson that my werke may not stonde, yef it may well be knownen by eny man?" Quod they, "We shall knewe it." And the kynge seyde he wolde yeve them what they wolde desire. Thus departed the counsell of the clerkes; and the vij a-biden stille, that gretely payned hem to knowe how that toure myght holde. Gretly stodied euery clerke be hym-self, but for all their labour thei cowde not fynde but oon thyng, and that thyng ne heilde of nought as to the toure; till that the kynge comaunded hem to sey that they hadde take in charge. "Sir," quod thei, "that ye vs axen is a grete thyng. We moste yet haue viij dayes of respyte." Quod the kynge, "I will well that ye have so longe terme; and be well ware that than ye sey me the trowthe." Than wente the clerkes to counsell, and seide oon to anothir, "What seme ye of this thyng that the kynge vs demaundeth." Quod oon of hem, "Will ye do well? lete eche man by hym-self telle me what hym semeth in this mater." Ther-to they accorded; than thei drowgh a-syde eche be hym-self; but thei seiden of the tour they ne knewe nought, saf they sye a grete merueyle, for thei saugh a childe of vij yere age, that was born withouten fader erthly; and thus seide eche of hem. Than seide this other, "Cometh ageyn to-morowe alle to-geder."

**O**n the morowe, when thei were alle come be-fore hym, he seide, "Ye have alle seide to me oon thyng. Ye seyen alle

\*[Fol. 9b.]  
They say that  
some might  
know the  
cause by as-  
tronomy.

Seven that  
know that art  
are brought  
before the  
king.

For all their  
labour they  
cannot find  
out the thing.

They ask for  
a respite of  
eight days.

All see a child  
of seven  
years of age  
who was  
born without  
a father.

<sup>1</sup> Between the words *stonde* and *Do* are two marks, apparently to fill up the space of the line.



that ye come nought se touchynge the tour, but ye syen a childe of vij yere age, born with-oute erthely fader. Ye seiden to me no more, and ther is noon that ne seeth, that by that same childe we shull alle be destroyed; and this have ye alle fro me conseed. Now," quod he, "yef ye will leve me, ye shal warant youre owen lyves, and I will telle how we shull acorde alle to oon tale, and seyn alle that this tour may not holde, but yef in the fundacion be put the blode of this childe, and than the tour shall stonde. And thus lete eayche of vs sey by hym-self, so that the kyng ne a-parceyve not; but let vs diffende the kyng, that he se hym not quyk, but thei that shull go to seche hym brynge his blode. Thus may we kepe vs from him be whom we se that we shull alle dye." Thus ended their counsell; and come be-fore the kyng, and seide that thei wolde not sey openly, but eche by hym-self in counsell, "and so shull ye wite who seide beste reson, and that the oon sholde not knowe the counsell of his felowe." And so the kyng examyned eche by hym-self. When the kyng and his \*counsell herde this merveile, thei seiden it myght welbe yef they myght fynde a childe born that hadde no fader, "ye have eche of yow tolde me oon tale." "Sir," quod thei, "yef it be not thus, doth with vs youre volente." Than seide the kyng that he wolde have hem well kepte till he knew the trouthe. And thei seide, "Sir, ne speketh nought with the childe, but comaunde as soone as he is founden that he be slayn, and that the bloode be brought to yow." The kyng made hem alle be shett in a stronge house, and made delyuere that hem neded; and cleped certeyn gentilmen, and made hem to be sworne to do truly his massage, and comaunded hem to seche after a childe of the age of vij yere, whiche was born with-owte fader erthely. Of these gentilmen were xij; and also the kyng dide hem to swere that whiche of hem sonneste myght fynde this childe, a-noon with-oute tariynge he sholde it sle, and brynge the blode of the chylde vn-to the kyng, and that thei sholde not returne with-inne two yere, lesse than thei myght fynde the seide childe. Thus the kyng lete seche this childe. The messagers departeden two and two to-geder, and passed thourgh

They agree to tell the king that the tower can only be made to stand by putting the blood of this child in the foundation.

The king examines each by himself, \* [Fol. 10a.] and they all agree in their counsel.

They ask him to command that the child be slain as soon as he is found, and the blood brought to him. The king commands twelve gentlemen to seek for the child and slay him.

The messengers depart two and two together.

many londes and contres in to a tyme that iiij of hem sodeynly metten to-geder.

Four of them pass through a field where Merlin is playing with some children.

One of the children calls Merlin misbegotten and fatherless.

Merlin comes to the messengers and tells them it is he that they seek.

They marvel at his knowledge.

He tells them that if they will do him no harm he will go with them, and tell why the tower may not stand. They think it a pity to slay him.

Merlin takes them home to his mother.

[\*Fol. 106.]

Thus thei reden in oon company, alle iiij, till on a day that thei passeden thourgh a feelde be-side a town where-in were grete plente of children, that ther-in were pleyinge. And Merlyn, that knewe well that these iiij com to inquire after hym, drough hym towarde oon of the richest of the company, for that he wiste hym moste fell and hasty. He hente his staf, and yaf this childe a grete buffet. And a-noon this othir be-gan to crye and wape, and to myssey Merlyn, and reproved hym with a lowde voyce, and cleped hym "mys-begeten wreache and faderles." When these messagers herden this, thei com toward the childe that was wepyng, and axed hym whiche was he that hadde smyten hym. And he hem ansuerde, "It is the sone of a woman whiche never knewe who hym be-gat, ne never man cowde telle of his fader. And when Merlyn herde this, he com a-geyn them laughinge, and seide, "I am he that ye seche, and he that ye be sworn ye sholden sle, and brynge my blode to kyng Vortiger." And thei herden hym thus sey, thei were sore a-merveyled, and axeden hym, "Who hath tolde the this?" Quod he, "I wiste it er ye were sworn." Quod thei, "Than moste thow come with vs." "Nay," quod he, "I doute that ye will me sle." And yet he knewe well that thei hadde ther-to no talant, but he seide that for to prove hem better. Quod Merlyn, "Yef ye will graunte me that ye shull not do me disese, I will go with yow, and also telle why the tour may not stonde." And when thei herde that, thei were more a-baissed than be-fore. "Truly," quod thei, "this childe is merveilouse, and grete pite it were hym to sle." And eche of hem seyde that hem were better to be forsworn than to sle this childe. Than said Merlyn, "Ye shull come herberewe ther as is my moder, for I may not go with yow with-oute takynge leve of here, and also of a gode man which is in the same place." Thei seide, "We will go where that thow wylte." \*Thus brought merlyn the messagers of the kyng to his moder place, and when Merlyn come in to the house he comaunded that thei sholde have gode chere. When thei were

alyght, he brought hem be-fore blase, and seide, "Se hem here that I tolde sholde come to seche me to sle," and seide to them, "I pray yow that ye sey the trouthe be-fore this gode man, why that ye beth sente, and wite ye well yef ye gabbe eny-thinge, I know it wele i-nough." And thei ansuerde, "We will no lesynge make." Quod merlin to Blase, "Maister, vnderstonde well what thei sey." Quod the massanger, "We be with kyng Vortiger, whiche hath be-gonne to make a stronge toure; and when the werke of this tour is iij or iiij fadom of height, it may not holde, but synketh in an hour all that is wrought in iij monthis. Wherefore the kyng is angry and wroth, and he dide sende after clerkes to knowe the cause that his werke may not holde." "Ye," quod Merlin, "but noon of the clerkes ne cowde se the cause that letted the werke to holde; but thei sien how I was born, and how that I myght hem distroie, and so thei dide acorde that I sholde be slayn, and seide that the kynges werke sholde stonde, yef he myght have the blode of the childe born with-out fader. And when Vortiger herde this, he heilde this a grete merveile, and trowed that that the clerkes seiden trewe. And the clerkes charged the kyng that in no manere he sholde not se me a-lyve; but as sone as I were founde, that I sholde with-out respite be slain, and my blode to be brought to be putte with the mortar in the foundement of the tour, and by that thei seiden it sholde holde. Vortiger, by their techynge, toke xij messagers, and made alle xij to swere that thei sholde me sle, and bringe with hem my blode; and of these xij be heer iiij whiche, when ye were met, passeden thourgh the feild where childern were bourdinge, and I, that knewe ye come me for to seche, smote oon of my felowes, for I wiste well he wolde sey of me the werste that he knewe in his anger, and ther-fore I it dide, that this gode man shulde fynde me trewe of that I hadde seide." "Now, maister," quod merlin to blase, "axe hem yef it be so as I sey." "Truly," seide blase, "it were grete pite hym to sle, for yef he lyve he shalbe right wise." "Certes," seide eunreche of the messagers, "I hadde leuer be disherited

He brings them before Blase.

They promise to tell the truth,

and relate how Vortiger built a tower.

Merlin stops them, and tells how the clerks advise that he be slain.

He tells them that they are only four out of twelve messengers sent by Vortiger,

and that he smote one of his fellows that they might discover him.

Blase says it would be a pity to slay him.

The messengers say they would rather be disinherited than slay him.

than he hadde resceyved deth thourgh me, and he hym-slef seth that he knoweth all thyng, wote yef ther-to we have talent or noon."

They ask whether he will go with them.

Then thei cleped in a-geyn merlyn, that was gon oute at dore; and Blase seide to hym how thei badde hym axe yef he wiste that thei hadden talent hym to sle. And merlyn lowgh, and seide, "I wote well now thei be nothyng in will ther-to." Quod thei, "Wilt thou go with vs;" and merlyn seide, "Ye, with gode will, yef ye will promyse me truly to brynge me be-fore the kyng, and that ye ne suffer noon other to do me harme ne disese, er I have with hym spoken." And thei hym graunted. Than seide Blase, "I se well that thou wilt now leve me: what wilt thou that I shall do of this werke that I haue be-gonne?" "That shall I telle the," quod merlyn;

Blase asks Merlin what he shall do.

\*[Fol. 11a.]

Merlin tells him to ask after Northumberland,

and he will come to him there.

"thow woste well that oure lorde hath yove me so moche witte and memorye, that he that wende to be siker of me, hath failed of his purpos, and I moste go in to that contre \*ffro whiche these be come to fecche me. And ther shall I be the beste beleved man that euer was, [s]ef all only god that is Almyghty; and thou shalt come thider, to make an ende of the werke. But thou ne shalt not come with me, but by thy self, and axe after a londe that is cleped Northumbirlande. And that contre is full of grete forest, and full wylde to them of the selue contre. Ther thou shalt a-bide, and I shall come to the, and telle the all the mater that longeth to thi werke. And moche is thy trauayle, and thou shalt have gode leyser, and as longe as the worlde dureth shall thi boke gladly ben herde. And wite thou well that my grete traueill shall not be by-fore this kynges courte. This kyng, to whom all my grete traueill shall be, and the traueile of grete Breteyne, his name shalbe Arthur. Thou shalt go thider, as I have told the, and I shall often come to the, and brynge soche tidinges as thou shalt put in thi boke. And wite it well, peple shulbe glad euer to heiren it; for shul but fewe thinges be don but in no place, but ther in shalbe a partye. And thi boke shalbe cleped while the worlde endureth, the boke of the seynt Graal." Thus spake merlyn with his maister, and taught

King Arthur.

Blase's book to be called the Boke of the Seynt Graal.

hym how he sholde do. He yeleped hym maister, for that he was maister to his moder. When the gode man herde merlin thus speke, he was glad, and seide, "What thow wilte comaunde me I am redy to do it."

Thus Merlyn made hym redy to go, and seide to the messengers, I will go take leve of my moder. Tho he brought hem ther as was his moder, and seide, "Feire moder, heire ben come men of fer contrees, for to seche me, and I will go by youre leve; ffor me houeth to yelde the to Ihesu Criste, of that he hath yove me power, and that I may not do; but I go thider as thei shullen lede me. And Blase, youre maister, also shall go, and moste we bothe departe fro yow at this tyme." "Ffeire sone," quod she, "to god I comaunde yow, for I knowe not yef it were wisdom to witholde yow, or noon; but yef it were youre plesier, I wolde that Blase sholde a-bide." "Dame," quod he, "it may in no wise ben."

Merlin takes leave of his mother.

She commends him to God.

Thus toke Merlyn leve of his moder and wente with the massengers, and on the tother side Blase departed, and yede in to No[r]thumberlond, ther Merlin had hym comaunded, and the massagiers rode forth till thei come thourgh a town in whiche was a market, and when thei were passed thourgh thei ouertoke a carl, that hadde bought a payre of stronge shone, and also stronge lether to clowte hem with. And when merlyn sye the carle he be-gan to laughe. The messagiers axed hym wherfore he lough. "I laugh," quod he, "at this cherl that hath bought hym so stronge shoone, and also clowte lether, and I telle yow certeynly that he shalbe dead before he come fully to his howse." \*And when thei herde thes, thei heilde it a grete merveile, and seide thei wolde wyte yef that were trewe. Than two of them sewed hym, and other two abode with Merlyn. They hadde not folowed the cherl half a myle, that thei fonde hym deed, in myddell of the wey, and his shone a-boute his nekke. Than thei returned, and ouer-toke hir felowes, and tolde hem the merveyle that thei hadde seien. "Fforsothe," quod thei, "grete foles were the clerkes that so wise a man wolde have slayn." "In feith," quo the oon, "I sholde suffer grete

Merlin and Blase depart separately.

Merlin and the messengers overtake a carl.

Merlin prophesies that the carl will die before he gets home.

\*[Fol. 11b.]

They find him dead in the middle of the way.

Merlin thanks the messengers for what they have said of him.

They see a dead child about to be buried.

Merlin tells them that the child is the priest's son.

The messengers go to the child's mother.

She beseeches them not to tell her husband.

myschef er he had eny harm." And so thei seiden alle iiii, that Merlyn ne herde it not. And when thei were come to merlyn, he thanked hem of that thei hadde seide, and that wolde hym so moche gode. And thei were gretly abasshed, and seiden, "We may nought sey, ne do, but this childe knowe it." Thus thei riden forth her iourneis, till thei come with-inne Vortigers power. And as thei passed thourgh a town, they saugh a deed childe on a beere, born to chirche, to be beried. And after the corse was made grete doel and wepynge. And when Merlyn saugh the wepynge, and sye the preste and the clerkes wente synginge be-fore, he gan to laugh, and seide to his felowes, "I se a merveile." And thei axed, "What?" Quod merlyn, "Ye se that gode man that maketh this grete sorowe." And thei seide, "Ye." "And se ye not the preeste that singeth all be-fore." Quod thei, "We se hym well." "Forsothe," quod Merlin, "he ought to make the sorowe that the tother gode man maketh, for wethet it well that the childe is the prestes sone; and the other man wepeth, and hath more cause to laugh." Quod thei, "How may we knowe that it be so?" "Goth to the moder, and axe whi she doth wepe; and she will sey for her sone, that is deed. And ye shall sey, it is not hir sone, but the Prestes sone, that so hye singeth; and than shall ye heere what she will sey."

The massagers wente to the woman, and toke her in counseill, and seide as Merlyn hadde hem taught. And when the woman herde hem so sey, she was abaissed, and seide, "Seres, for godes love, mercy! I se wele I may not to yow lye, though I wolde, for that ye sey is trewe; but I be-seche yow telle it not my housbonde, for than he wolde me sle." And when thei hadde herde this merveile, they turned, and ouertoke her felishep, and seiden as thei herde. And than thei reden forth till they come a iourney fro thens ther Vortiger was. Than seide two of the messagers to Merlin, "We shall go be-fore to the kyng, and telle hym þat we have founden; now yeve us counseile how thow wylte we shall sey, for I trowe he will blame us that we have not the slayn." "Sirs," quod Merlyn, "sey as

I shall telle yow, and ye shalbe well excused. Ye shull go to Vortiger, and sey that ye have me founden, and sey I shall telle hym truly the cause whi his tour may not stonde; with this condicion: that the Clerkes haue the same Iuyse that thei hadde ordeyned for me. And also sey him, I can telle hym why the clerkes wolde haue me deed. And when ye have seide thus, doth hardely that he yow comaundeth." With that the messengers departed, and come to Vortiger. And when he sye them, he was gladd, and axed a-noon how they hadde spedde. \* "Sir," seide thei, "in the beste wise that<sup>1</sup> we may." Than they cleped the kyng in counseile, and tolde how thei hadde founde Merlyn; and also they seide, yef he hym-self ne wolde, they sholde hym neuer have founden. "Of whiche Merlyn," seide the kyng, "speke ye? sholde ye not haue sought the fadirles childe, and have brought me the blode of hym." "Sir," thei seide, "that same is Merlyn, that we of speke to yow. And wetith it wele that he is the wisest man, and the beste devynour that is, saf only god. And, sir," seide thei, "right as ye made vs to swere to do youre comaundement, all that was don and seide he cowde wele telle vs, at oure firste metynge, and he tolde vs also that the clerkes ne knewe not the cause why that youre tour may not stonde; but he shall telle yow apertly. And many other grete merveilles hath he vs shewed be the wey; and hath vs sente for to wite yef ye will with hym speke. And yef ye will we shull sle hym, for two of oure felowes beth there as he is." "Yef ye," quod the kyng, "will take vpon youre lyves that he shall telle me whi my toure fallith, I will not þat he be deed." "We will vndertake it," quod thei. "Than, go fecche hym," quod the kyng.

Merlin tells the messengers what to say to Vortiger.

They depart, and relate to Vortiger how they found Merlyn; \* [Fol. 12a.]

and that he can tell the king why his tower will not stand.

The king tells them to fetch Merlyn,

**T**he messengers yede their wey, and the kyng rode after hem. When Merlin saugh the messengers, he seide to them, "Ye have plegged me vpon youre lyves that I shall have no drede of deth," and thei ansuerde, "Thou seiste trewe, for hadde lever a be in grete auenture than thow sholdest dye, and that oon

who tells them what they have said to the king.

<sup>1</sup> The word "that" is repeated.

Merlin  
speaks to the  
king.

moste vs nedes do." "I shall waraunte yow," quod merlin, "of that ye have vndertake." Thus thei rode forth till thei mette with the kyng, and a-noon merlin hym salued, and seide, "Sir kyng, lete me speke with yow in counseile." Than the kyng drough a-part, and called hem that he hadde brought with hym. "Sir," quod merlyn, "thow haste do seche me for thi toure that may not stonde, and comaundeste me to sle be counseile of thy Clerkes, *bat* seide the toure sholde holde by vertu of my blode. Thei have not seide the trouth; but yef thow wylte *graunte* me to do to hem the same that thei wolde do to me, I will telle the cause whi it falleth, and also I shall teche the how thow shalt make it to stonde and endure." And Vortiger ansuerde, "Yef thow do as thou seiest I will do with hem as thow wylte." "Than," quod Merlin, "go we thider as this toure is in makynge, and make the Clerkes be brought theder, and I shall axe hem whi the toure doth falle, and so mayste thow hieer ther ansuere." Than thei wente to the place ther<sup>1</sup> the toure sholde be made, and the clerkes were sente fore, and come be-fore the kyng.

He asks that  
the clerks be  
sent for.

Merlin asks  
them why  
the tower  
fell.

And whan thei were come, Merlyn made oon to axe of hem whi that that toure fill, and thei ansuerde, "We knowe no cause whi it fill, but we can telle what shall make it for to holde." And then seide the kyng, "Ye tolde me a *merveillouse* thyng, that I sholde do seche a childe born with-uten fader, and I wote not how he myght be founden." Than spake Merlyn and seide to the clerkes, "Sirs, ye holde the kyng a fole, that thus make hym seche a man that is born with-uten fader, and ye no do it nothyng for his *profite*; but ye dide it for this, that ye fonde in youre sorte that ye shulde be deed thourgh hym, and for \*drede ther-of haue ye do the kyng to vnderstonde that I sholde be slayn, and my blode be putte in the foundement of the toure, and that sholde make it to laste and holde; thus ye thought to sle hym, be the whiche ye sholde be brought to the deth as be youre sorte." When thei herde the child telle hem

He tells them  
that they  
wished him  
to be slain  
to save their  
own lives.

\*[Fol. 126.]

<sup>1</sup> The word "ther" is repeated twice.



that thei supposid no creature hadde knowen, thei weren a-basshed, and wiste wele that thei sholde dye. Than Merlin seide to the kynge, "Now may ye knowe whi these clerkes wolde have me slayn : nought for to holde youre toure, but for theire sorte seyde thei sholde dye for me. Now axe hem yef this be true, for thei sholde not be so hardy be-fore me to make yow no lesynge." "Seith he trewe?" quod the kynge. "Sir," said the clerkes, "ye, truly; but we merveile wherby he myght this knowe. Wherefore we be-seke yow to graunte vs to live, that we may see that he shewe the trowth whi the toure fallith, and yef he can telle the remedye." "Certes," quod Merlyn, "have ye no drede to dye be-fore ye se the cause that the toure doth falle, and that the werke may not laste?" "Sir kynge," quod Merlin, "vnderstonde, and I shall telle the. Vnder this erthe is a grete water, and vnder that water be two dragons that see no sight; so is that oon reade and that other white, and a-bove them is two grete flat stones, and when thei fele that the werke peyseth hevyn upon them, they turne hem, and the water maketh so grete bruyt that all that is made a-boven it moste nede falle. Now lete loke yef this be trewe or no; and yef it be founde that this be cause that the werke stondesth not, lete my plegges be quyte, and the clerkes in blame, that of all this ne knewe nothinge." "Certes," quod Vortiger, "yef this be as thow seist, than art thow the wisest man of the worlde. Now telle me how this erthe may be hadde a-vey." And Merlin seide, "In cartes and on mennes nekkes." A-noon the kynge made come laboreres, and Merlin comaunded that the clerkes sholde be wele kepte, and so wrought the laboreres, that thei hadde a-vey the erthe, and fonde the water, and dede it to laden oute, and lete the kynge wite how thei hadden don. The kynge come thider gladly, and brought with hym merlin. When he com thider, he beheilde the water that was grete, and cleped two of his counsellors, and seide, "This childe is right wise that knewe this to ben heere, and yet seith that ther ben two dragons vnder, and I will knowe the soth, what-so-euer it coste." Than the kynge cleped Merlyn, and seide, "How shall we haue this water a-vey?" Quod

They are  
abashed.

The king  
asks them if  
Merlin says  
true.

Merlin ex-  
plains that  
under the  
tower is a  
great water,  
and under  
the water  
two dragons.

Labourers  
cast away the  
earth and  
find the wa-  
ter.

Gutters are made to lead off the water into ditches.

Vortiger sends for all the worthy men to see the dragons fight.

\*[Fol. 13a.]  
The water is all voided.

Merlin tells Vortiger and three worthy men that the white dragon shall slay the red.

The people lift up the stones and find the two dragons.

The dragons fight together with teeth and feet.

Merlyn, "Lete make goteres in to the diches." Than were the diches made, and the water to renne oute. And Merlyn come to Vortiger, and seide, "As soone as these dragons felen to-geder thei will fighten strongly, and that oon shall sle that other; therefore send after alle the gode men of thi londe to se the bataile, for it hath grete singnificacion." Than sente Vortiger after alle the worthy men of his londe, Clergie and other; and when thei were alle comen, Vortiger tolde hem the merveiles that Merlin hadde shewde, and of the two dragons how thei shulde fight. Than seide oon to a-nother, "It is gode to be seen;" and they axed the kynge yef he knewe whiche sholde haue the better; and the kynge seide he hadde not yet tolde. Whan the water was all voided thei saugh the two stones \*that were vpon the two dragons. The kynge axed how thei myght be hadde a-wey, and Merlyn seide, "Full wele, for they will neuer meve till eche of hem fele other, and than shull thei fight till that oon muste dye." The kynge axed, "Whiche shall have the victorie?" "In the fightynge," quod Merlyn, "is grete signifiance, whiche I may not telle, but gladly I will telle the be-fore three worthi men." Than Vortiger cleped thre men that he moste truste inne, and Merlyn axed, "Be these thre men wele of thi counseile?" and he ansuwerde, "Ye." "Than may I telle be-fore them that thou demandest. I do the to wete," quod he, "that the white shall sle the reade; but first shall he have grete peyne, and in that he shall sle hym is grete tokenynge to hym that can it vnderstonde; but I will sey no more till the bataile is at an ende." Than yede the peple to oon of the stones, and leften it up, and founde the white dragon. When the peple saugh hym so grete and hidouse thei hadde grete drede. Than wente thei to the tother ston, and drough it a-wey, and than thei were more aferde than be-fore, for it was moche greter and semed more feirce. And as Vortiger semed he moste ouercome that other. And Merlin seide to the kynge, "Now lete my plegges be quyte." "So be thei," seide the kynge. Tho spronge vp the two dragons and foughten to-geder with teeth and feet, and neuer herde ye of so stronge bataile be-twene two bestes, ne so

crewell fight. And so thei foughten to mydday, and the peple semed that the reade sholde ouercome the white, till that the white threwe so moche fier and flame that he brente vp the reade, and so was he deed. Than the white leide hym down to reste for werynesse, and ne lived after but thre dayes. And thei that this syen seyde that neuer so grete merueile hadde be seyn be-forn. And Merlin seide to the kynge, "Now mayste thow make thi toure as grete and large as thow wylte, for it shall no more falle." Than comaunded Vortiger the werkemen to make vp the toure the strongest that myght be deuides; and often axed Vortiger of Merlyn the significance of the two dragons. And he seid, "It was the tokenynge of thinges that were don and also of thinges that were to come, and yef thow wylte ensure me that thow shalt do me noon harme heere in audience of this peple, ne suffer noon other to do me harme in thy reame, I will telle the signification." And Vortiger made hym soche suerte as he wolde. Quod Merlin, "Bringe hethir thy counsell, and the clerkes that sorted of this toure." The kynge dide as he comaunded. When thei were come Merlyn spake to the clerkes, and seide, "Ye were foles in youre art, that wolde not a-quite yow as trewe men, and therefore ye be worthi to haue as ye haue deserved. And ye sawgh wele how I was bore. And he that shewed yow that, made yow semblance that ye sholde be deed for me, and that dide he for sorowe that he hadde loste me, and therefore he wolde that ye hadde me putte to deth; but I haue soche a goode lorde, that he shall me deffende yef it be his plesier, and I shall make hym a lyer, for ye shull neuer for me be deed, yef ye will me graunte to do that I shall yow sey." And when they herde hym sey that thei sholbe respited fro deth thei were gladde, and seiden, "What that thow comaundest we shall do it, for we se well that thow arte the wisest man that liveth." Quod Merlin, "Ye shull swere neuer to entermete of that arte, \*and I will that ye be confessed and take youre penaunce so that youre soules be not dampned." And thei hym thanked, and seide thei sholde do his comaundement.

The white  
burns up the  
red,

and dies  
three days  
after.

The tower  
shall no more  
fall.

Vortiger asks  
what is the  
significance  
of the dra-  
gons.

Merlin  
speaks to the  
clerks.

He respites  
them from  
death.

\*[Fol. 133.]

Thus delyuered Merlin the Clerkes, whiche made hym to be sought for to be putte to deth. Vortiger com to hym, and seide, "Telle me the significaunce of the two dragons." "The reade dragon," quod Merlin, "be-tokeneth the, and the white dragon signifieth the sones of Constance." When Vortiger herde this, he was a-shamed. And merlin seide, "Yef thou wilt, I will sey more; with that thou conne me no magre." Vortiger seide, "Here ne is no man, but of my prive counsell; and therefore I will thou telle me alle the trouthe." "I tolde the," quod Merlin, "that the reade signifieth the, and I shall telle the how the children of Constance were yonge and tender, after the deth of their fader; and yef thou were soche as thou oughteste to have ben, thou sholdeste have kepte hem, and yeven hem counseile a-geins alle erthly men. And well thou knowest that thou haste their heritage wrongfully; for when thou knewest the peple loved the, thou drowest the a-bakke, for to helpe them in their nedes. And when eny of the londe complayneth to the for the kynges Innocence, and seiden thei wolden thou sholde take vpon the to be kynge, to defende the reame fro their enmyes, thou ansueredest couertly, and seidest thou myghtest not while kynge Moynes was livinge. And thei that thou seidest this to, vndirstoden wele that thou woldest haue hym deed; and and therfore thei slown their kynge. But thei leften two brethern, the whiche fledde in to straunge londe, for drede of the. And so were thou made kynge; and yet thou holdest their heritage with wronge. And when thei had kyld the kynge Moynes, thei come be-fore the; thou madest hem to be distrowied, to shewe semblaunce as thou hadde for-thought the kynges deth." Vortiger vndirstode wele that Merlyn hym tolde, and wiste wele that he tolde hym the trouthe; and seide, "I se well that thou art oon of the wisest men of the worlde. Wherefore, I pray the to yeve me counsell in this cas, and also telle me on what deth I shall dye." Quod he, "Yef I telle the that I wilnot sey the betokenyng of the two dragons. I do the to wite that the reade Dragon signifieth the, in that he was so grete and hidouse, be-tokeneth the, and thy grete power. And the white

He tells Vortiger the significance of the dragons,

and that he has defrauded the children of Constance of their right.

Vortiger knows that Merlin tells him the truth.

Merlin tells him what will happen,

dragon be-tokeneth the two childeren that be fledde for drede of the. And that thei foughten so longe to-geder, be-tokeneth that thow haste so longe kepte their herytage with wronge. And that the white dragon brente the redde dragon, betokeneth that the two brethern shull brenne the with their power. And therefore I ne trowe not that this toure shalbe thy warante, but that thow shalt dye by hem." When Vortiger vndirstode this, he gan to wrathe, and axed hym, "Where ben these children?" Quod Merlyn, "Thei be in the see, with grete strengthe of peple; and come into heir londe, to take vengance on the; ffor thei seyn thow dedist their brother to be slain. And wite it wele that thei shall a-ryve with-inne thre Monthes with-outé any faile."

and that the children are coming to take vengance on him.

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### CHAPTER III.

THE DEFEAT OF VORTIGER BY PENDRAGON AND UTER; THEIR SEARCH AFTER MERLIN; THE BATTLE OF SALISBURY AND DEATH OF PENDRAGON; AND THE FOUNDATION OF THE TABLE AT CARDOELL, IN WALES.

Full sorowfull was Vortiger of these tidinges, and axed of Merlin yef it myght be any other maner. And he seide, "Nay." And when Vortiger knewe that the children come with so grete power, he somowned his peple a-geyn the tierme that Merlyn hadde seide. Vortiger com to Wynchester \*with all his oste, but no man ne wiste the cause whi, saf thei that weren of his counseile. And as soone as Merlin hadde seid the kynge, alle the tokenynges of the two dragons, he toke leve, and wente to Blase, and tolde hym alle thynges like as were beffalle; and he wrote it in his boke. And ther was Merlyn longe tyme, till that the sones of Constance lete seche hym in many contrees. Vortiger a-bode to the day that Merlin hadde rehersed; the same day saugh thei of Wynchester the shippes comynge by the see; where-in weren the two sones of Constance. And than Vortiger comaunded his peple to armes, and to deffende the

Vortiger summons his people to assist him.

\*[Fol. 14a.]

Merlin tells Blase what has happened.

The two sons of Constance arrive in a vessel.

Vortiger's  
people fail  
him.

He takes to  
his castle,

and is burnt  
by Pendra-  
gon.

Pendragon is  
made king.

He besieges  
Aungier.

The Barons  
tell him of  
Merlin.

Pendragon  
sends  
through the  
land to seek  
Merlin.

Merlin ap-  
pears to the  
messengers  
as a beggar,

portes. And when thei of the portes saugh the baners roiall of kyng Constance, thei hadde grete merveile, till that the vessell that the two brethern were inne come in to the havene. And thei that kepte the porte axed to whom longed that vessell; and they ansuerde it was the vessell of Pendragon and Vter, whiche were come in to their owne londe, to take vengauce on Vortiger, that as a fals traytour longe tyme hadde them disherited. When the peple of the contre saugh their lorde hadde brought so grete power, thei seide they wolde no longer hoilde with Vortiger. And when he saugh the moste parte of his peple him failed, he hadde grete drede, and seide to them that he trusted that thei sholde stuffe the Castell; and thei dide so. The shippes weren a-rived, and the knyghtes isseden owte, and alle the other peple. And the peple of the contre wente a-geyn hem; and them resceved as they sholde do her lorde. Vortiger and his mayne weren in the Castell, and the two brethern assailed hym vigorously, till that Pendragon caste in fier, and brente vp Vortiger, and alle that were in the castell with hym. And thus toke they vengauce on their enmy. Aurelius Ambrose made Pendragon kyng, whiche was a Iuste man and a trewe. And the Danoyes, that Vortiger hadde brought in to the londe, werred sore vpon the cristen peple. And pendragon be-seged Aungier in the castell of the Vysee. And ther thei token counsell how thei myght beste take the Castell. At this counsell were v barons, that hadde herde the significance of the two dragons, that Merlin hadde expowned to Vortiger. And so thei cleped Pendragon and his counsell a-part, and tolde hem the merveile that thei hadde herde of Merlyn. And, "wite ye well," seide thei, "that he is the beste devynour that is, saf god oonly." And Pendragon axed where he myght be founden. And thei seide, "We knowe not in what contree." Quod Pendragon, "Yef he be in this londe, he shall welbe founden." Than sente Pendragon thourgh his londe, to seche Merlyn. And Merlin, that knewe all this, tolde it to Blase, and departed fro hym, and com in to a town where as the messagers were that soughten after hym. He come to hem like a beggar, with boustouse shone on his feet, and

in a cote al to rente, and hadde a grym berde and steirne loke. He come in to the house that they were inne, and seide, "Ye do symply youre mayster erende, as he yow comaunded. for to seche Merlin." And thei ansuerde, "What deuell who hath tolde this cherl, wher-of entermeteth he?" Quod the cherl, "Yef I wolde, I sholde fynde hym \*moche sonner than ye." Than they turned towarde hym, and axed hym yef he hadde euer hym sien. "Ye," quod he, "I have sein hym, and I knowe his repaire; but he tolde me that ye labour a-boute nought ffor to seche hym, for though he mette with yow, he wil not go with yow. But go to youre prynce, and telle hym that he shall neuer wyne the Castell till Aungier be slain. And wete ye wel that of the v that tolde the kyng tidinges of Merlin, ye shall fynde but two livinge. And telle youre lorde, yef he will fynde Merlin, lete hym seche hym in the forestes of this contree."

\*[Fol. 146.]

and tells them that he will not go with them.

The messagers vndirstod wele that Merlyn hem tolde, and that oon be-heilde that other, and a-noon he was oute of ther sight; and than they seide to hem-self, "We have spoken with the devell. What shull we do of that he hath vs seide?" "Forsothe," quod that oon of hem, "we shull go telle oure lorde like as he hath vs seide." And than thei riden forth till they come in to the oste ther as the kyng was; and a-noon as the kyng hem sygh, he axed, "Have ye founde hym that ye wente for to seche?" "Sir," they seide, "we shall telle yow like as we have founden." Than thei tolde the kyng of all that the cherl hadde seide vn-to hem all as it was. And when the kyng herde this he merveiled, and so dide thei that hadden first enformed the kyng of Merlyn, for that the messagers spoken of so grym and hidouse man, for supposid that Merlin myght not take noon other shapte but his owne; netherdeles, thei knewe wele ther cowde no man have seide thise wordes but it hadde a be Merlin, and axed of the messagers in what place it was that thei founde this cherl. "Truly," seide thei, "he come in to oure loigginge in Northumberlonde while we satte at oure mete." Than seiden thei that it was Merlyn with-uten faile, and that he wolde the kyng hym-self sholde come seche hym. Quod the

They think they have spoken with the devil.

They come to the king and tell him what has happened to him.

He marvels at their relation.

The king  
goes to seek  
Merlin.

One of his  
men meets a  
grim man,

whosays that  
he will tell  
the king of  
Merlin.

The king  
goes to the  
churl,

whotells him  
to go to a  
town and  
wait for Mer-  
lin.

\*[Fol. 15a.]

A comely  
man comes  
to the king,

and tells him  
that Uter has  
slain Aun-  
gier.

kyng, "I shall leve the reame to my brother Vter, and I will go my self to speke with hym." And they come in Northumberlonde, they enquired tidinges of Merlin, but thei founde noon that ought of hym cowde sey. And as the kyng rode thourgh the foreste it fill that a man of his fonde grete plente of bestes, and a man that hem kepte whiche was of a counterfete shapte and of a grym chere, and they axed hym of whens he was, and he ansuerde, "Of Northumberlonde, a seruauunt of a worthi man; but yesterday," quod he, "I saugh a man that tolde me that the kyng Pendragon come for to seche Merlin in this contre." Quod that other, "It is soth that the kyng doth hym seken. Canst thou ought telle where he is?" And the cherl ansuerde and seide, "Yef I saugh the kyng, I wolde sey to hym that I wolde not telle the." "Than com with me," quod he, "and I will shewe the kyng." Than seide the cherl, "I sholde kepe my bestes; but yef he come heder I will telle hym gode tydings of that he goth seching." Than he departed and come to the kyng, and seide as he herde the cherl say; and the kyng badde "Bringe me ther." Than he ledde the kyng to the same place, and seide to the cherl, "Lo, her is the kyng; now sey to hym what thou wilt." Quod he to the kyng, "Thow goist seching Merlyn, but thou shalt not fynde hym till he will hym-self. Therefore go to a gode town and take thy logginge, and he shall sone come to the when he wote thou doiste a-bide hym." "How may I knowe that?" seide the kyng. Than the kyng<sup>1</sup> \*rode to the nexte town that he fonde in the forest, and thider come to hym a comely man wele araied, and seide to the kyng, "Sir, Merlin sente me hider to the, and sente the worde that it was he, that thou mette with-inne the wode kepyng bestes. Be this token that he seide he will come to the when thou haste of hym myster, but now thou haste of hym no nede, and by me he sente the gode tidinges. Wite thou wele that Aungier is ded, for thy brother Vter hath hath hym slayn." And tho the kyng hadde grete merveile, and seide, "May this be true that thou

<sup>1</sup> The words "than the kyng" are repeated at the top of the page.



seist." "He seide to me no more," quod he; "but and thow mystruste hym thou art a foole."

Than the kynge made two messagers to ryde in all haste, to wite yef it were true. And thei rode forth till thei metten the messagers of Vter, that come to telle the kynge of Aungers deth. And when thei weren mette, thei returned a-geyn to the kynge, and tolde how Vter hadde slain Aungier. And the kynge comaunded hem to kepe counseile, for he merveyled gretly how merlin myght have witinge ther-of, and thought in his herte that he wolde axe hym how Aungier was deed. And as the kynge come fro chirche on a day, ther mette hym a comly man, well araied, and clenly, that seide to hym, "Sir kynge, what a-bideste thow in this town?" Quod the kynge, "I a-bide after Merlin, that sholde come heder to speke with me." "Sir," quod he, "though ye mete hym, ye can not knowe hym; but clepe to yow soche men as ought for to knowe hym, and axe them yef I may be Merlin." And they come be-fore hym, and he hem frayned what was here a-bidinge. Quod they, "We a-bide the gode devynour." "Sirs," seide the kynge, "yef ye myght se Merlin, cowde ye hym knowen?" "Sire," seide thei, "it myght not be but that we sholde hym kenne wele, yef we myght him se." "Sirs," quod he that was be-fore the kynge, "may eny man knowe a-nother when he knowith not hym-self." And thei seiden, "We may not wele knowe all his werkinge, but yef we myghten sen his semblaunce, we sholden knowe hym wele." And than ansuerde the man, and seide, "Ther is no man that can at alle tymes knowe his semblaunce." And than he toke the kynge in counseile, and seide, "Sir, I will be with yow, and with youre brother. And I do yow to wete that I am he that ye have sought. Now, go ye oute, and clepe hem that sey thei knowen Merlin; and as sone as they come, thei shull sey ye haue me founden." Than was the kynge right gladde, and in all haste cleped hem that cowden knowe Merlin. And Merlin toke the semblaunce that thei hadde sein hym be-fore. And a-noon thei seiden, "Lo, here is Merlin." Quod the kynge, "Be well a-vised that ye knowe it is he." And thei seide, "We

The king sends messengers to see if he says true. They meet the messengers sent by Vter to tell of Aungier's death.

The king meets a comely man.

He asks some men if they would know Merlin if they saw him.

The man tells the king that he is Merlin,

and then takes his old form.

knowe verely it is he." Than seide the kyng, "I wolde fayn knowe yef euer I spake with yow be-fore, sith I come in to this contre." "Sir," quod Merlyn, "I am the man that ye fonde kepinge the bestes, and also I am the man that tolde yow that Aungier was deed." Than seyde the kyng, "Sirs, ye knewe Merlin full euell." And thei seide, "Sir, we sye hym \*neuer do thus be-forn." And than the kyng axed of Merlyn, "How knewe ye the deth of Aungiers." Quod Merlyn, "A-noon as ye were departed fro youre oste, to come hider, Aungiers wolde haue morderid thi brother in his teinte. And I wente to thi brother, and warned hym of Aungiers purpos, and of his strengthe, and how he wolde come be nyght hym-self to his teynte, formeste of his company. And thi brother dide not mystruste me, but made good waicche all that nyght, sole be hym-self, till that Aungiers com with a knyf in his honde, to sle thi brother. And Vter lete hym entre in to his teynte, and serched a-boute; but he fonde not Vter ther-in, wherfore he was sory. And at the comynge owte, thi brother faught with hym, and slowe hym his owne handes." Than the kyng axed hym in what semblaunce he hadde spoken with his brother. "Sir," quod he, "I was like a sadde olde man." Quod the kyng, "Tolde ye hym what ye were?" And Merlyn seide, "Nay; ne he ne shall not wite till ye telle hym youre self." Than seide the kyng, "I pray yow right, deere frende, that ye will come with me, for I have grete nede of youre counseile." "Sir," quod Merlin, "the sonner I come ther, the wrother shall be youre meyne." Quod the kyng, "Thow hast seyde so moche, that thow hast saued my brother fro the deth, that I shall neuer the mystruste." Quod Merlyn, "I shall speke with thi brother in the same forme that I warned hym of his deth, and shalbe with-inne this xj dayes." And the kyng seide, "And it plesse yow, lete me wite when ye shall speke with hym." "Ye shall wite it well," quod Merlin, "but, loke ye, discure it not to noon creature, as ye will haue my love."

Thus was Pendragon and Merlin first a-queynted. And Merlin toke his leve, and wente to Blase, his maister, and tolde hym alle thinges. And he wrote hem in his boke. Pen-

\*[Fol. 155.]

The king askshim how he knew of Aungier's death.

He tells how he went to Uter to warn him of Aungier.

The king asks Merlin to go with him.

Merlin promises to speak with Uter in eleven days.

He goes to Blase.

dragon taried not till he come to his brother Vter. Wher-of Vter was ioyfull, and toke the kynge in counseile, and tolde hym of the deth of Aungiers, in the same wise as Merlin hadde tolde. Quod the kynge, "I pray yow telle me what man that was that warned yow of Aungiers." "Be the feith that I owe to yow," quod Vter, "I can not sei what he is, but wele he semed a wise man, and therfore I yaf to his counseile credence." "Brother," quod Pendragon, "kowde ye ought knowe hym, and ye myght se hym agein?" "Sir," seide Vter, "ye, right wele." And Pendragon seide, "I do yow to wete he will speke with yow with-inne these xj dayes; but I pray yow that ye be euer in my presence, that I may se alle tho that come to speke with yow, that I may wite whether I may knowe hym sonner than ye." And Vter ther-to graunted. And Merlin tolde all this to Blase: how the two brethern hadde spoke to-geder, and how thei were acorded of hym, and how Pendragon wolde assaie hym in all the maner that he myght. Than Blase axed what he dought to do. And Merlyn seide, "Thei be yonge men and Iolye, and have grete nede of counseile, and I knowe a faire lady that Vter paramours. And I will go, and bringe hym a letter, as it were from her, for I knowe alle the prevy wordes that have ben be-twene \*hem two. The xj<sup>e</sup> day come Merlin to courte, like a boy that hadde ben a messenger from Vters love, and seyde, "My lady sente me to yow, and sendeth yow gretinge, and sente yow this letter." And Vter toke it with grete ioye, for he wende his lady hadde sent hym that letter, and seide he sholde yeve credence to the bringer ther-of, and of all that he sholde sey. And Merlin tolde hym many tidinges, soche as he wiste wele that he wolde gladly listen. Thus a-bode Merlin with hym, till it was ny even; and grete merveile hadde Pendragon that Merlin com not as he hadde made promyse, till that merlin drow hym a-syde, and toke the same semblaunce that he spake with Vter the firste tyme that he warned hym of his deth. And a-noon, as Vter hym saugh, he knewe hym wele, and praide hym that he wolde tarie a-while, till he hadde spoke with the kynge, his brother. And Vter tolde Pendragon how the gode man was come, that

Pendragon  
discourses  
with his brother.

Merlin tells  
Blase what  
the two brothers  
had  
spoken to-  
gether.

\*[Fol. 16a.]

Merlin comes  
to Uter as a  
messenger  
from his mis-  
tress.

Pendragon  
 marvels that  
Merlin does  
not keep his  
promise, till  
he appears in  
the form that  
he spake first  
with Uter.

The king wel-  
comes him,

and tells his  
brother who  
he is.

Merlin takes  
again the  
form of a boy.

The brothers  
ask Merlin  
to be their  
governor.

warned hym of the treson of Aungiers. And than come thei bothe to-geder to that man. And whan the kynge sye hym, he made grete ioie, and seide he was welcome. And than the kynge seide, "Will ye that I telle my brother who ye ben, and what youre name is?" And Merlin ansuerde, "I will wele that he knowe what I am." Than seide the kynge, "Feire brother, ye knowe not who this worthi man is. I will that ye wete he is the wisest man that leueth, and moste may vs profite and helpe. And I do yow to wite that ther come noon other boy in message be-fore yow this day, saf this worthy man. And he hym-self toke yow the letter fro youre souereine lady." When Vter herde this, he was astoned sore, and seyde to hym-self, "How myght I this knowe, or be-leve, for it were the most merueile of the worlde." Quod he, "Wite it wele ye may it als truly be-leve as eny thinge that ye beste knowe." "In feith," quod Vter, "I may not leue it, but I myght it other-wise prove." Than the kynge prayde Merlyn that he wolde shewe some maner demonstraunce." "Than," quod Merlyn, "go ye a litell oute, and shall shewe the same boy that brought the letter." And thei yede oute of the chamber, and Merlin toke a-gein the semblaunce of a boy, and come to Vter, and seide, "Sir, I will go; is ther eny thinge that ye will comaunde me?" And than seide the kynge, "Brother, be thow right sure that this is the same man that warned you of Aungys treson; and I lete yow wite that he hath power to knowe alle thinges that beth do or spoken, and of thinges that be to come grete partie. Wherefore I wolde hertely pray hym to be with vs of oure counseile; and by hym shall we be rulid of alle oure gouernaunce, for, trnly, brother, we have grete nede therto, and it were his plesier." Than bothe the brethern be-sought hym full lowly to a-bide with hem, and thei to be gouerned by hym as he wolde. And than Merlyn seide, "I lete yow wite that I knowe alle thinges, that me leste to wite." Quod Vter, "Haue to me seide so moche, that neuer shall I mys-trowe the fro hens all my live. And for youre grete wisdom, and it like yow, I wolde ye were lorde and gouernour of my brother and me." And Merlin ansuerde, "I will be with yow many tymes,

and I will also that ye tweyn prively in counseile knowe my conditions and my behavyng; but I moste be ofte tymes in the forestes, the chief of grete Bretaigne. And knoweth wele, in what place that euer I be, in the moste remembraunce that I shall haue, shall be vpon yow, and on yowre nedes, more than eny others. And in what maner nede that ye<sup>1</sup> \*have in eny encombraunce, I will euer redily come to yow, and helpe yow, and counseile. And therefore recched neuer when I go or come; and at alle tymes, when I come, make grete gladnesse of me be-fore youre peple, in youre howsolde." In this maner was Merlin witholden with Pen-dragon and his brother Vter. And he toke his leve of hem, and seide he wolde shewe hym in the same semblaunce that the peple of the contre were wonte to knowe hym inne. And when he come a-monge them, thei that knewe hym made grete ioie, and runne to telle the kyng that Merlin was comen. And a-noon the kyng wente a-geins hym; and grete was the ioie that the kyng mad of Merlin. And when he was ther-inne, thei that hadde knowinge of hym toke the kyng in counseile, and seide, "Sir, lo, heir is Merlin, whiche is the wysest man that is in all the worlde, saf god al only. Therefore, pray hym to teche you how ye shall do in-getyng of this castell, and how that this werre shall ende." The kyng seyde he wolde gladly of hym enquire, as thei desired. And so at that thei sesid, for the kyng wolde hym wurship and honoure in all that he myght. And on the thirde day the kyng made alle his counseile a-semble, and than the kyng demaunded Merlin of that his barons hadden desired to knowe, and seide, "Dere frende, I have herde moche spek of yow, that ye be oon the wisest man that is in the worlde. Wherefore, I pray and requere yow in this wise, that I shall euer be at youre wille, that ye will lete wite how I myght haue this castell." And Merlin ansuerde, and seide, "I do yow to wite as sone as the sarazins have loste Aungys, thei desire nought ellis but forsake the londe. And to-morow sende to hem to wite what thei will do; and thei will desire the londe that thei were wonte to

He agrees to come to them wheenver they need him.

\*[Fol. 16b.]

He shows himself to the people,

who bring him to the king.

The king asks Merlin how he can take the castle.

Merlin tells him to send to the Sarazins.

<sup>1</sup> The words "that ye" are repeated at the top of the page.

The king  
sends Ulfyn.

The messen-  
gers go to  
the castle.

The Sarazins  
take counsel  
together,

and tell the  
messengers  
their answer.

The king  
asks Merlin's  
advice,

whotells him  
what to do.

\*[Fol. 17a.]

They of the  
castle hear  
with joy that  
they may go  
safe.

They leave  
the land.

One of the  
barons is  
envious of Mer-  
lin,

holde of youre fader ; but ye ne shall not agre ther-to, but when ye knewe their ansuere, ye shall offer them to condite oute of the londe, and shippes to their passage." Than sente the kynge, Vlfyn and thre other knyghtes, and Merlin yaf hem the message.

These messagers wente towarde the castell, and when the sarazins sye hem comynge thei yede hem a-geins, and freyned yef thei were come in message fro the kynge ; and Vlfyn seide, "Ye." Quod Vlfyn, "The kynge sente yow trewis for thre wokes." And thei ansuerde, "We will take counseile." Than thei yede to-geder a-parte, and seiden, "We beth gretly hyndred be the deth of Aungys, and we haue heere no vitaille to abide after socour of oure frendes, and heere is profered vs trewis to passe, and with-oute vitaille we may not longe endure ; but lete vs sende to hym to suffer vs to haue the castell and the londe that longeth ther-to for to be holden of hym and of his heyres, and that we have xxx<sup>ii</sup> knyghtes on horse to yeve hym to trewage, a C stedes, a C palfrayes, and a hundred faucons." And to this thei acorded alle, and come to the messagers and tole as thei were acorded, and thei returned and tolde the kynge their ansuere, and the kynge axed Merlyn his advyse, and Merlin seide, "This shall ye not do, for therof sholde come grete harmes ; but I shall telle yow how ye shall do. Sende to hem a-noon with oute tariynge that thei yelde yow the castell, and thei shall do it gladly, \*ffor thei have no vitaille ; and profer hem to go saf with their lyves, and I do yow to wite they had neuer gretter gladnesse." And as Merlin devised, the kynge dide, and sente his message with this requeste. When thei of the Castell herde thei myght go saf with thier lyves, thei hadde grete ioye, and that was cried thourgh the londe. And the kynge lete condite hem to the portes, and deliuered hem the navie in to passo. Thus were alle put oute of the londe, be counseile of Merlyn, and so was Merlyn all gouernoure of the kynge and his counseile longe tyme ; till on a day that he spake with the kynge of a great matire, wherof oon of the barons hadde grete envye, and come to the kynge, and seide, "Sir, it is a grete merveile that ye have so grete bileve to this man, for wite it verily,

all that he can cometh by the devell. And yef it plesse yow, I shall a-say hym, so that ye shall se it aptly." Quod the kyng, "I will well that ye assay hym in soche maner that he ne be not wroth." "Sir," quod he, "I shall not do nothinge that sholde cause hym to be angry." And the kyng hym graunted. This baron was right wise, and full of euell vyces. And on a day he come to court, and made Merlin grete chere, and called hym be-fore the kyng in counseile, and wele xx<sup>ti</sup> knyghtes. And than he seide to the kinge, "Sir, here is Merlin, which is þe wisest man of the worlde, and he tolde Vortiger of his deth, and how ye sholde do hym be brent. I pray yow for that ye knowe wele that I have grete sekenesse, that he will telle yow what deth I shall deye, yef he knowe it."

and asks the king to let him try Merlin.

He asks Merlin what death he shall die,

Than ansuerde Merlin, that wele knewe his fell herte, and seide, "Sire, ye have me praide to telle of youre deth, and I shall sey the soth; ffor that day thow shalt dye, thow shalt falle of an horse, and breke thy nekke." And seide he to the kyng, "Sir, ye have herde how he hath seide; and god defende me ther-fro." Than he wente hom to his contre as soone as he myght, and after com to courte a-gein to the kyng, and made hym right seke; and sente to the kyng in counseill, that he sholde come se hym, and that he sholde bringe with hym Merlin in soche wise that Merlin sholde not knowe the cause why. And the kyng assented. And the kyng come to Merlin, and seide, "There is a seke man, lete vs go se how it is with hym." And Merlin seide, "Sir, a kyng ought not to go so prevely, but to haue<sup>1</sup> his meyne a-boute hym." And the kyng cleped soche as he wolde, and wente to the seke man. And when thei come ther, he seide to the kyng, "Sir, I pray yow that ye will axe youre devynour yef I shall dye on this sekeness." And Merlin seide, "He shall not dye on this maladye." Tho enforced he to speke, and seide, "Sir, on what deth than shall I dye?" And Merlin ansuerde, and seide, "Thow shalt be hanged, and so shalt thow dye hanginge." And than made Merlin semblaunce

whotells him he will break his neck.

The baron sends to the king to ask him to come to him and bring Merlin.

They go to the sick man.

Merlin says he will be hanged.

<sup>1</sup> The word "have" is repeated.

The baron  
says to the  
king that  
Merlin is but  
a fool,

but he will  
try him the  
third time.

He feigns  
himself to be  
a sick monk.  
\*[Fol. 17b.]

The abbot  
comes to the  
king be-  
seaching him  
to see a monk  
who was sick.

Merlin  
speaks to the  
king and  
Uter.

The Abbot  
asks if the  
sick man will  
recover.

Merlin says  
he will break  
his neck, be  
hanged, and  
also drown-  
ed.

The Baron  
says Merlin  
is a fool.

as he hadde be wroth. And when he wiste that Merlin was gon, he seide to the kyng, "Sir, now wite ye verily that he is but a fole, that hath tolde these two dethes, whiche may not be acordinge; and yet I shall assay hym the thirde tyme. I will to-morowe go to an Abbey, and feyne me stronge sike, and I shall sende to yow that a monke of his is so sike that he is in doute of his lif, and pray yow to brynge with yow Merlin." And the kyng it *grawnted*. And than wente this baron to an abbey, and dide all in like wyse \*as he hadde devised to the kyng. And than he sente for the kyng, and he come, and brought Merlyn; and so thei come ridyng to the abbey, and herde messe. After masse, come the Abbot, be-sechyng the kyng to come se a Monke whiche was sore seke, and that it plesed hym to bringe with hym the wise man Merlin. And the kyng axed of Merlin yef he wolde go thider with hym. And Merlyn seide, "Ye; but first I will speke with yow and with Vter." And than he toke hem a-part, and seide,

"Sirs, the more that I am with yow a-queynted, the more foles I fynde yow. Wene ye that I knowe not what deth this fole shall on dye; and ye shull haue now more merueille than of all that I haue seide be-forn." And the kyng ansuerde, "May this be true that he shall dye in soche wise?" "Yef it be not so," quod Merlin, "leve me neuer of nothyng that I shall sey; and thus moche I sey to Vter: that I shall se his deth, or he departe his companye." Than thei wente thider, as the abbot hem ledde; and the abbot seide to the kyng, "Sir, plesse it yow to axe of youre devynour, yef this seke shall euer be hoill of this sekenesse." And Merlin made semblaunt as he hadde ben wroth, and seide, "He myght wele a-rise, for hym eyleth noon evell. And lete hym knowe verily that day he shall on dye he shall breke his nekke, and be hanged, and also be drowned. And therfore lete hym no more feyne, for I knowe wele his corage, and that his false herte thynketh." And he a-ros vp sittynge, and seide to the kyng, "Sir, now may ye wele knowe his folye; how myght this be, that the day I shall on dye, I sholde breke my nekke, and be hanged, and also to be drowned;



ffer I knowe wele that may not be, nother of me, ne of noon other. Now loke yef ye be a wise man to yeve so grete credence to soche a man." And thus thei departed, and all aboute it was knowen how Merlin hadde thus seide of this mannes deth. After it fill on a day, that this man that thus sholde dye, rode with moche peple, and come to a river, wher ouer was a bregge of of tymber. And his palfrey stombled on his knees, and he ouerthrew, and brakke hys neke, and he rolled don of the bregge in to the water, that a sharp planke of the brigge caught thourgh his garment, so that his legges and his reynes hengen above the water. And many of them that were in his company were there as Merlin tolde of his deth. The cry was grete that thei made to drawe hym oute of the water; and than thei seide, "A grete fole he is that will not leve that Merlyn seith." Thei didnen with the body as was right; and merlyn, that all this knewe wele, seide to the kynge and Vter how it was be-tid of this man. And the kynge axed when this myght be, and he seide, "Yesterday; and they that were with hym that tyme sholde come withinne these vj dayes to bringe the tidynges. And therfore I will go, for I will not be here when thei come, for thei will demaunde me of many questions, wherof I will not ansuere, ne I ne will speke but litill be-fore the peple, but so derkly that they shul not vnderstande what I sey." Thus seide Merlyn to the kynge and to Vter; wherfore the kynge thought he hadde be wroth, and was therfore full sory and hevvy. And so wente Merlyn to his maister Blase, and tolde hym of alle thynges, and many other that were be-falle.

\*On the vj<sup>e</sup> day come thei to the kynge that hadde sein the deth of this baron; and when they were come they tolde the kynge the merveile. And than seide the kynge, and alle that herden ther-of, that ther was no-where so wise a man as Merlyn, and seiden fro thens-forth all that they myght hier hym speke or sey they wolde lete it be wreten. And so began the boke of propheties of Merlin, that spake of the kynges that sholde be in Engelande, and of alle other thinges that he spake of, and he knewe that alle his wordes sholde be wreten. He tolde to Blase, and Blase axed Merlyn yef thei

The king and Merlin depart.

The man, passing over a bridge, is thrown from his horse, and is killed as Merlin prophesied.

The people say that he is a fool who does not believe Merlin.

Merlin tells the king and Vter of the man's death.

The king fears that Merlin is wroth. He goes to Blase.

\*[Fol. 18a.]

Those who saw the death of the Baron come to tell the king.

They begin to write the book of Merlin's propheties.

Blase asks Merlyn if it would be such a book as he is writing.

Merlin returns to court.

He speaks mistily.

He tells the king that the Sarazins will not rest till they have avenged the death of Aungier.

The king asks if they have great power,

and says he will be ruled by Merlin's counsel.

Merlin counsels him to send for the people to make joy and feast,

and to suffer the enemy to come on,

who will have disease for want of water.

The brothers ask if either of them will die.

sholde make soche a-nother boke as he dide. And he seide, "Nay; for they shull write not elles but soche thinges as no man shall vndirstonde till it be fallen and passed." And than come Merlyn a-geyn to courte, and thei hym tolde the tydinges as he hadde not knowe ther-of.

Than be-gan Merlin to speke so mystily, wher-of the boke of prophesyis is made. And after come Merlin to the kynge and to Vter his brother, and seide to hem pitously, "I love moche yow and youre wurship; haue ye no mynde of the sarazins that ye drive oute of the londe after the deth of Aungis?" And thei seide, "Yesse, full wele; but why sey ye?" Quod Merlin, "I sey for this: that they sey thei shull neuer fenisshe till thei have a-vengid the deth of Aungis. And thei have assembled a grete power, and wele to conquere this londe be force." When the kinge and his brother herde this, thei merveiled gretly, and axed of Merlin, "Haue thei so grete power to holde party a-geyn oures?" And he ansuerde a-geyn, "Euery man that ye haue defensable, they have tweyne; therefore, but ye be wisly ruled, ye shull be distroied, and lese youre reame." Quod the kynge, "We wilbe ruled be youre counseile." And than he axed, "When trowe ye that they shull come?" And Merlin seide, "The xj day of Iuyn; and noon ne shall this knowe, saf ye two; and I deffende yow to speke ther-of, but do as I shall yow counseile. Sende after alle youre peple, and make hem the grettest ioye and feste that ye may, and comaunde hem to be the laste day of Iuyn, on the playn of Salisburyc." Than seide the kynge, "Shall we suffer hem to aryve with-oute deffence?" And Merlyn seide, "Ye; yef ye will do my counseile, and suffer hem to come as fer as ye may fro theire a-rivage; and so shall ye kepe hem two dayes, and thei shull haue grete disese for lakke of water. And the thirde day ye shull with hem fighten; and yef ye do thus, ye shull haue the victorye." Than seide the two brethern, "I pray yow telle vs yef eny of us shall dye in that bataile." And Merlin ansuerde, "Ther is no-thinge that hath be-gynnyng, but it moste have endyng, ne no man ought to be dismayed of deth, to reseuyve it as he oweth to do; and

therfore I will that ye bringe the hiest reliques that ye haue, and ye shull bothe swere to do as I shall sey yow, for yowre profite and youre worship, and than shall I boldely telle yow how ye shulbe gouerned." And thei swore as Merlin dide devise. And when thei were sworn, Merlin seide vnto hem, "Ye haue sworne that in this bataile ye shull be gode men and true, a-gein god and youre-self. Ne noon may be trewe to hym-self but he first be trewe to god; and, loke ye, be trewly confessed, for that ye shull fight a-geyn yowre enmyes; and \*after haue no doute to ouercome theym, for thei have no bileve in the trinite. And wite ye wele that seth cristendom come first in to this Ile, was neuer so grete bataile, ne neuer shall in youre tyme. And also knoweth wele that the oon of yow two moste nede passe in this bataile; therfore eche man ordeyne for his moste worship that he can, a-geins that he cometh be-fore his lorde. And that oon of yow most go to hym; and therfore goth in soche wise that ye may haue his love when ye come to his presence."

Thus ended the counseile of Merlyn. And the two b[r]ethern vnderstode what he hadde seyde, and sente after alle the estates of theire londe. And when thei weren alle come, thei yaf hem grete yeffes. And the kyng hem praide to make hem garnysshed of their armes, and of horse; and also the laste woke of Iuyn to be redy, in the entre of the playnes of Salisbury, vpon the river of Tamyse, to diffende the reame. And thus it lefte till the day that was somowned. And the two brethern a-geyn their burghes and townes made gode ordenaunce, as Merlin dide hem counseile. And at Pentecoste thei heilde courte vpon the rivere, and there were many riche yestes. Ther thei were so longe, till thei herden that the Danoyse weren a-rived. Than the kyng sente to prelates of the chirche, that euery man of the oste sholde be confessed, and euery man to foryeuen other, and be in charite and clene lyf. Than seide Pendragon to merlin that tydinges were come; the Sarazins weren a-rived. And Merlin seide it was trewe. Than the kyng axed what was his counseile to do. And Merlin seide, "Ye shall to-morowe sende thedir that oon half of youre peple; and when they be

Merlin makes them swear to do as he tells them,

and conjures them to confess themselves before the fight.

\*[Fol. 18b.]

He prophesies that one of the brothers will die.

The brothers send for all the estates of the land,

and pray them to be ready in the last week of June on the plains of Salisbury, on the Thames.

They hold court on the river, till they hear that the Danes have arrived.

The king sends for the prelates to confess every man of the host.

Tidings of the arrival of the Sarazins. Merlin counsels them to send forward half the people.

come from their a-rivage, than go be-twene hem and the aryvage ; and youre peple shulde holde hem so shorte, that there ne shal be noon of hem, but thei wolde fayn be ther as thei come fro. And thus shull ye do two dayes, and the thirde day, whan ye se a dragon all reade fleyng vp in the ayre, than boldly fight with hem, for ye shall haue the vycorye."

On the third day they will see a dragon in the air.

Pendragon and Uter only at this council.

Merlin conjures them to be good men,

and tells Uter he will not die in battle.

Merlin goes to Blase.

Uter and his people come between the Danes and their ships. The king comes. The Sarazins are dismayed. The sign in the air.

\*[Fol. 19a.]

Great mortality on both sides.

Pendragon is killed.

Uter wins the battle. None of the Sarazins escape.

At this counseile were no mo but Pendragon and Vter. And when thei hadde herde this thei were gladde. And than seide Merlin, "I will go ; and be ye right sure of this that I haue yow seide, and thenke to be gode men and gode knyghtes." Thus thei departed, and Vter made redy his felishep to go be-twene hem and the ryver. And Merlyn come to hym, and seide, "Thenke to do wele, and haue no drede, for thou shalt not dye in this bataile." When Vter herde þis he was gladde in herte. Than Merlin wente to his maister Blase in Northumbirlande, and tolde<sup>1</sup> hym many thinges that he wrote in his boke. Vter and his peple rode till thei come be-twene the Danes and their shippes, and kepte hem two dayes, that thei myght neuer ryde. The thirde day the kynge come so nygh that thet oon myght se that other. Whan the sarazins saugh the two hostes, thei were gretly dismayed, and sye wele that thei myght not repaire to their shippes with-oute grete bataile. Than shewde the signe in the ayre that Merlin hadde seide, and than the Danes hadden grete drede. And the kynge seide to his peple, "Now vpon hem in all that we may." And whan Vter saugh the kynges bataile, and the Danes assembled, \*he sette vpon hem as vigorously or more. In that bataile was grete mortalite on bothe parties, but the hethen peple hadde moche the werse. And ther Pendragon dide merveloise knyghthode a-monge his enmyes, and so dide Vter ; but I may not telle alle they well dedis. But Pendragon was ther deed, and many a-nother gode baron, wher-of was grete pite and losse to the cristen partye. And as the boke witnessith, Vter venquysshed the bataille, and ther ne ascaped noon of the sarazins but that thei weren deed or taken. And thus ended the

<sup>1</sup> The word "tolde" is repeated.

bataile of Salisbury, wher-as Pendragon was deed. And so all the londe left hoill to Vter his brother. He made geder alle the cristen that weren deed, and made hem to be beried in a place bi them-self, and a-reised his brothers tombe moche hier than eny of the tother, and lete write vpon eche beryinge place his name that lay vnder; but on his brother wolde he nought write, for he seide who that them be-heilde myght wele vndirstonde that he was chief lorde. Than Vter went to logres, and alle the prelates of the cherche, and ther was he sacred and crowned. And thus was Vter kynge of the londe after the deth of his brother Pendragon. And the quynsynne after that Merlyn come to courte, and grete was the ioye the kynge made to hym. And than seide Merlyn to Vter, "I will that thow haue surnonn of thi brother name; and for love of the dragon that appered in the ayre, make a dragon of goolde of the same semblaunce." And the kynge dide do make this dragon in all the haste he myght, like to the dragon that sewde in the ayre. Than he lete sette it on a shafte in stede of a baner, and lete it be born be-fore hym in euery bataile at alle tymes when he sholde fight. And thus was euer after he cleped Vterpendragon. And Merlyn a-bode with hym longe tyme after, till on a day that Merlyn hym axed, "Ne shall thow do no more to the place in the playn of Salesbury, wher-as thy brother is buried?" And the kynge ansuerde, "What wilt thow that I do, for I will do euen as thow wylte devise?" Quod Merlin, "I will that thow ordeyne ther soche a þinge as shall endure to the worl[d]es ende." And the kynge seide, "Telle me in what wise, and I will do it with gode will." Than quod Merlin, "Sende after the grete stones that ben in Irlonde, and make hem to be brought in thy shippes, and I shall go to shewe them which I will haue that thei shall brynge." Than Vterpendragon sente vesselles grete plente, and Merlin hem shewde the stones that were grete and longe, and seide, "Lo, these ben the stones whiche ye ben come fore." And when they hem saugh, they it helde for a grete mervoile, and seide it was a thyng impossible to charge, they were of soche gretnesse and wight; and in their vessellis they seiden sholde they not come, ycf god

Uter buries  
all the Chris-  
tians,

his brother's  
tomb higher  
than the  
others.

He goes to  
Logres,  
where he is  
crowned.

Merlin comes  
to court,

and tells Uter  
to take his  
brother's  
name as a  
surname,

and to make  
a dragon of  
gold like the  
one seen in  
the air.

Merlin asks  
Uter what he  
will do to  
Salisbury  
plain,

and tells him  
to send for  
great stones  
from Ireland.

Uterpendra-  
gon sends  
vessels.

The men say  
they cannot  
carry the  
stones,

and return to  
the king.

wolde. And so thei returned to the kyng, and tolde the mer-  
veile, and the kyng than seide, "Suffer till Merlyn come."

Merlin pro-  
mises to  
move the  
stones.

And when Merlyn was come, the kyng hym tolde like as his  
men hadden seide, and Merlin seide, "Sith it is so that  
they may not hem hider bringe, I shall a-quyte me of my pro-  
myse." And than Merlin made by crafte of his arte to bringe  
the stones that weren in Irlonde to the playn of Salesbury.

\*[Fol. 196.]

The king and  
the people go  
to see the  
marvel.

And the kyng and moche peple wente to se the merveile; \*and  
when thei saugh the grete stones, thei seden that all the worlde  
ne myght not hem remove. And Merlin badde they sholde be  
dressed vp-right, for thei sholde seme feyrer so than liggyng.

Merlin places  
the stones  
over the  
burying-  
place of Pen-  
dragon, still  
called Stone-  
henge.

He takes the  
king into his  
counsel,

And the kyng seide that myght no man do, saf only god. Than  
seide Merlyn, "Let me worthen ther-with, and I shall a-quyte  
me of the couenaunt<sup>1</sup> that I made." And so all the labour left to  
Merlyn; and he dressed as thei be yet ouer the beryng place of  
Pendragon, and ben yet cleped the stonehenges. And than come  
Merlin to Vterpendragon, and hym serued longe tyme and moche  
hym loved. And so on a tyme he toke the kyng in counseile,  
and seide, "Sir, I moste discure to yow the hiest counseile that  
ye herde euer, and that thinge that I shall of speke shall be  
right straunge; and I requyre yow that ye it not discure to no  
man lyvyng." And the kyng graunted his requeste. Than

and requires  
him to dis-  
cover it to no  
man.

He tells him  
how he got  
his power.

seide Merlin, "I will that ye wite that the knowinge that I  
haue cometh be the enmy by nature; and oure lorde that is  
almighty a-bove alle thyng hath a-bove, that yove me witte and  
memorye to knowe grete partye of thynges that be to come, and  
by this souereyn vertu the enmye hath me lorn that with the  
plesaunce of god they shull neuer haue power over me at her  
volunte. And sir, now ye knowe fro whens I haue this power.  
And I will telle yow a thinge that god will that thow shalt do.  
And whan ye knowe what it is, loke ye, performe it to his plesier.  
Sir, ye ought well to knowe that god come in to erthe to saue  
man-kynde, and also, as ye well knowe, he made a soper, and  
seide to hys apposteles, 'Oon of yow shall me be-trayen.' Sir,

God came on  
earth to save  
mankind.

<sup>1</sup> This word is spelt "comenaunt" in the MS.

many provertees and grete suffraites suffred oure lorde her in erthe for oure sake, and many shames that the Iues hym diden; and after that he suffred bitter deth for vs upon the crosse; and a knyght axed his body when he was deed vpon the seide crosse, and it was *graunted* hym of Pilate in lower of his servyse."

"Sir, it fill after that, this knyght whiche hadde taken oure lorde down of the crosse, that he was in a waste con-tree full of diserte, and moche of his lynage. And, sir, vpon hem fill a grete famyne and hunger, and thei complayned to the knyght that was thier maister. And he prayde oure lorde to shewe his mercy to hem, and to shewe some demonstrauce, that they myght be confortd of their grete disease. And oure lorde hym comaunded to make a table, in the name of that table at the whiche he was sette in the house of Symond leprouse, and bad hym take the vessell whiche that he hadde, and sette it vpon the table, and couer the table with white cloth, and also the vessell, all saue the parte toward hym. Sir, this vessell was brought to this seide knyght, by oure lorde *Jhesu criste*, whyle he was in prison xl wynter, hym for to comforte. And, sir, by this holy vessell were departed the company of gode and euell. And also at this table was euer a voyde place, that betokeneth the place of Iudas, ther as he satte at the soper, whiche he lefte whan herde that oure lorde seide that worde for hym, whan he seyde that he that ete with hym sholde hym be-trayen. Thus lefte Iudas the place voyde till that oure lorde set ther a-nother, that hight Matheu. This Matheu was sette in that place to fille vp the nombre of xij apostles. \*Sir, this place that was voyde at the table of Ioseph be-tokeneth the place that Matheu fulfild; and, sir, thus be these two tables convenable. And thus hath oure lorde filled the werke of man. And, sir, the peple that were ther-at cleped this vessell that thei hadden in so grete grace, the Graal; and yef ye do my counseile, ye shall stablisse the thirde table in the name of the trinite. And I be-hote yow, yef ye do this, ther-by shall come to yow grete honour and grete profite of youre soule; and also it shalbe a thyng that moste shall be spoken of thourgh the worlde." Thus seide Merlyn to Vterpen-

A knight asks for the body of Christ.

This knight was in a desert.

Hunger of some of his lineage.

Our lord commands him to make a table,

and couer it with a white cloth.

The vessel brought to the knight by our Lord.

Judas's place at the Lord's Supper.

Matthew set in that place.

\*[Fol. 20a.]

The vessel is called the Graal.

Merlin counsels the king to establish a third table.

The king is well pleased. dragon, wher-of he was well plesed, and seide to Merlin, "I will that oure lordes wille be performed in all that is in me, in all thinge that be to his wille; and all I putte in youre ordenaunce."

Where shall the table be set? And than was Merlyn gladde, and seide, "Sir, loke where ye plesse beste that it be sette." "Certes," quod the kynge, "where as thow wylte, and ther as thow trowest it be moste oure lordes wille." And Merlyn seide, "It shall be at Cardoll, in Walys, and make ther thy feest at Pentecoste. And array the to make gode chere, and to yeve grete yettes; and I shall go be-fore, and make the table, and whan thow arte come, I shall setten them that owen ther-at to sitten."

Merlin says it shall be at Cardoll.

## CHAPTER IV.

THE FEASTS AT CARDOELL; UTER-PENDRAGON'S LOVE FOR YGERNE, AND HIS WAR WITH HER HUSBAND, THE DUKE OF TINTAGEL.

The king does as Merlin devised, and comes to Cardoell the week before Whitsuntide. He asks Merlin who he will choose to sit at the table. Merlin chooses fifty knights to sit at the table. He shews the king the voyde place.

All as Merlyn devised dide the kynge, and warned thourgh all his reame to be at Cardoell, in Walys, at the Pentecoste. And thus he lete crye thourgh all his reame, and Merlyn dide ordeyne all that longed to the table. The weke afore witsontyde come the kynge to Cardoell, and when he was come he axed Merlin how he hadde spedde, and he seide, "Wele." Quod the kynge, "What men shall ye chese to sitte at this table?" And Merlyn seide, "Ye shall se to-morou that ye wende neuer to seen, that I shall chese fyfty of the beste knyghtes of this londe. And whan thei be ones sette, thei will haue no grete desire to retorne in to their contrees. And thus ye may knowe whiche were gode men and worthy, whan ye se the signiffaunce of the voyde place." Thus Merlyn, on the witsontday, chese fifty knyghtes, and comaunded hem to be sette at that table to mete; and thei so diden with gode chere. And Merlyn that full of stronge arte, was yede hem aboute, and cleped the kynge as they weren sette, and shewed hym the voyde place. And many othir it syen, but they ne knewe not the tokenynge, ne why it was voyde.



When Merlyn hadde don all thus, he badde the kynge that he sholde go sitte; and thus they diden alle viij dayes. And the kynge yaf grete yeftes to lordes, and to ladyes, and to dameseles. And when they departed, the kynge come to the fyfty knyghtes, and axed how hem lyked. And thei seyde, "Sir, we haue no talent to remeve fro hens, and ther-of we haue merveile what it maketh, for we be entred as b[r]ethern; and therefore we will neuer departe till deth vs departe." When the kynge herde hem thus sey, he hadde grete merveile, and comaunded hem to be serued, and kepte as his owne body. And thus departed the grete prese. And than the kynge come to Merlyn, and seide, "Truly thow seidest me soth that oure lorde wolde that this table sholde be stablissed; but I wolde praye the to telle me \*yef thow knowe who shall fulfille the place that is voyde." And Merlyn ansuerde, "Wite thow right wele that it shall not be in thy tyme; ne he that shall accomplisshen, it is not yet be-geeten. But it shall be in the kynges tyme that shall come next after the; ne he that shall hym engendere shall not knowe that he shall hym engendere; and he that shall a-complysshe that sete must also complisshen the voyde place at the table that Ioseph made. And I pray yow therfore, that euer hens-forth that ye hoilde alle youre grete festes in this town." "Certes," quod the kynge, "I will gladly." And than seide Merlyn, "Sir, I moste go, and of longe tyme ye shull not se me a-geyn." And the kynge hym axed whider he sholde go; quod he, "Shall ye not be here at alle tymes when I holde my grete courte?" And Merlyn seyde, "No."

Than departed the kynge, and Merlyn yede to Blase, and tolde hym the stablissement of this table, and many other thynges. And thus a-bode Merlyn thre yere that he come not to courte. They that loved not Merlyn, but by semblaunce, come to the kynge on a day as he was at Cardoell, and axeden hym of this voide place, and why there was not sette some worthy man, that the table myght be full. And the kynge seide, "Merlin tolde me a grete merveile, that seide noon myght it a-complisshen in my tyme, ne yet ne ys he born, that shall en-

The king gives gifts to the lords and ladies,

and speaks to the knights.

They say they will not depart.

The king asks Merlin who shall fill the void place.

\*[Fol. 206.]

He that accomplishes that seat must also accomplish the void place at Joseph's table.

Merlin says he must leave the king for a long time.

He tells Blase of the establishment of the table.

Some enemies of Merlin ask the king about the void place,

who tells them thereason of it.

They laugh  
thereat,

and ask if  
there be no  
man in the  
land good  
enough.

They desire  
to be allowed  
to assay the  
seat.

The king  
grants their  
request.

Merlin tells  
Blase of the  
evil thoughts  
of his ene-  
mies.  
He will not  
go till he  
knows who  
has tried the  
place.

The king  
comes to Car-  
doel.

Themengive  
out that Mer-  
lin is dead.

The king be-  
lieves the re-  
port.

\*[Fol. 21a.]  
He asks who  
will assay the  
seat.

The chosen  
one comes to  
the table and  
tells the fifty  
knights he is

gendre hym that shall it compleshen." And thei lough ther-at, as they that weren full of envye, and seide, "Sir, trowe ye that ther shalbe better peple after youre tyme than beth now, and that ther ne be now, as gode men in youre londe as thei shull be." "Truly," seide the kynge, "I wote neuer." And thei seide, "Ye do not wele but ye assaye." "Certes," quod the kynge, "I will it not assaie, for I doute that Merlin wolde be wroth." And than they ansuerde, "Yef ye wele yeve vs leve, we will assaye it, and for to preve the grete lesynge." And the kynge seide, "Ne were the drede I haue of the wrath of Merlyn, ther is nothyng that I desire so moche to assayen." And they seide, "Yef Merlyn be livynge, and he knowe that we will it assayen, he will come with-oute faile, er eny man shall it assayen; but suffre that we may it assaien at Pentecoste." And the kynge hem graunted, wherfore they weren gladde. Thus it lefte till at witsontyde, that the kynge hadde do warne alle his barons to be at his feste at Cardoell. And Merlyn, that all thys wiste wele, tolde vn-to Blase the euell thoughtes that they hadden, that hadde take this enprise, and seide he wolde not go till he knewe who sholde assaye to preve that place, for he hadde leuer haue it preve by a shrewe than a gode man. Thus suffred Merlyn to the quynsyne of Pentecoste.

**V**terpendragon the kynge come to Cardoel, and brought with hym grete plente of peple. And thei that were come for to assaie the place made it to be seide that Merlyn was deed, and that he was founden in a wilderness madde, and cherles hym kylde. And so moche peple spake ther-of, that the kynge hym-self it leved; and more for that, he was so longe a-wey, than for eny thinge elles, and, namely, he wende in no wyse he wolde not have suffred that eny man sholde haue assaide the voyde place yef he were lyvyng. \*Thus was the kynge on witson-even at Cardoel, and axed of hem that sholde it assaie, whiche of hem sholde it do. And he that all this hadde ordeyned, seide, "Sir, I will that ye wete ther shall noon assaie it but I." Than he com to the table where as the fifty knyghtes weren sette, and seide, "I am come to sitte

with yow, and for to holde yow company." And they ansuerde no worde, but full mekely be-helde what he wolde do. And the kynge and grete partye of the barons weren ther assembled. This sette hym down in the voyde place, and a-noon as he was sette, he sanke down as it hadde be leed, so that noon wiste where he was be-come. Than the kynge comaunded alle the other gode men to aryse, and they so diden. And than a-noon be-gan so grete a noyse and sorowfull crye, that all the court was trowbled; and the kynge hym-self was gretely a-baished. Thus they a-biden to the quynsyne after Pentecoste, that Merlin come to courte. And whan the kynge wiste of hys comynge, he was right ioyfull, and wente hym a-geins to mete with hym. And a-noon, whan Merlyn saugh the kynge, he seide he had euell spedde, to suffre eny man to sytte in that place. "Trewly," seide the kynge, "I was disceyved thourgh here wordes." "In feith," seide Merlyn, "it falleth often to hem that wolden be-gile, that thei be-giled hem-self; and that maist thow wele proven be this." After the kynge axed, "Yef he wiste where he was be-comen that set hym in the sege?" And Merlin ansuerde, "Therof no force is for to enquire, ne nought it sholde a-vayle for to wite, but thenke on them that in þe other places sitten, and to mayntene that thow haste be-gonne; and alle thy festes and alle thy courtes, come holde hem heir in this town, for to wurship this table, for thow knowest by the assay that thow haste seyen that it is of grete dignite. And now I go; now, loke thow do as thow haste seyde." And thus departed the kynge; and Merlin comaunded the kynge to beilde feire howsynge, where he sholde euer after holde his courte and his hye festes. Than the kynge lete it be knowen thourgh his reame that all high festes, as Pasch and Pentecoste, and yole and halownesse, sholde be holden at Cardoel; and a-geyn the feste of yole, he somowned alle his barons, in soche maner that euerich of hem shulde brynge with hem their wyves and doughtres, and her neces or susteres. And the knyghtes so diden alle. I may not telle yow of alle tho that ther weren, sef of hem that the tale rehersed, oon after a-nother. Ther was the Duke of Tintagel, and Ygrine his wif;

about to hold  
them com-  
pany.

He sits down  
in the void  
place, and  
anon sinks  
down as if he  
were lead.  
The good  
men arise.

All the court  
is troubled.

Merlin comes  
to court.

He tells the  
king he  
should not  
have let any  
man sit in  
that place.

The king  
asks what  
has become  
of the man.

Merlin di-  
rects him to  
hold all his  
feasts in this  
town in order  
to worship  
the table,

and also com-  
mands him  
to build fair  
housing,  
where he  
should ever  
after hold his  
court.

The king lets  
it be known  
that all high  
feasts shall  
be held at  
Cardoel.

All the ba-  
rons, with  
their wives,  
daughters,  
nieces, or sis-  
ters are sum-  
moned.

The Duke of Tintagel and his wife Ygerne, whom the king loves greatly.

When she perceives his love she does not come into his presence.

The king sends jewels to every lady at the feast.

Ygerne dares not refuse her present.

\*[Fol. 21b.]

The king prays all the barons to be at Cardoel at Easter.

He greatly honours the Duke of Tintagel.

All the barons and their ladies assemble at Easter at Cardoel.

The king makes the Duke of Tintagel and Ygerne to be set before himself.

Ygerne is heavy at the king's love.

The king is in great misery for love of her.

He asks the advice of two men.

and hir the kynge loved gretly, but ther-of he made no semblaunce, saf that often he be-heilde her more than a-nother; in-somuche that hir-self it perceyved, and knewe that the kynge be-heelde her often. And whan she it perceyved, she eschewed to come in his presence, for she was right a gode lady, and full of grete bewte, and right trewe a-geins hir lorde. And the kynge for her love, and for he sigh she hadde taken hede of his lokynges, he sente Iuwelles to euery lady that was at the feste. And to Ygerne he sente as he trowed sholde beste hir plesse, and she knewe and sigh welc that he hadde sente to alle other ladies, and therfore she durste not refuse hirs, but receyved hem, and thought wele in her herte, that the kynge ne hadde not yeven to other ladies, but for she sholde not refusen hirs.

**T**hus hilde the kynge that feeste, that yet is with-outen wif, and was so supprised with the love of Ygerne, that he wiste not how to do, and thus departed the court; but firste the kynge praide alle the barons to be at Cardoel at Pasch, and so he prayed alle the ladies, and thei graunted to be ther. Whan the Duke of Tintagel departed fro courte, the kynge hym conveyed and gretly hym honoured at theyr departynge; and whan he hadde hym a while conveied, he toke leve, and yede thourgh the courte in his othir necessitees till that the tyme of Pasch, and than gan to assemble alle the barons and all the ladyes at Cardoel, and grete was the ioye that the kynge made, till it come to the mete tyme that the kynge made the Duke of Tintagel to be set be-fore hym-self, and also his wif Ygerne, so that Ygerne ne myght not eschewe but to resceve his yeftes, so that she it aparceyved verily that the kynge hir loved, wherof she was right hevvy, but ne she mot it suffer. Thus was this feeste holden in grete ioye, and the kynge hem prayde to come at alle tymes whan he hem comaunded, and thei seiden so thei wolden as to there souereyn lorde. And thus departed the courte; and so endured the kynge in grete mysese for love of Ygerne, and at laste he complayned hym-self to tweyne that he moche trusted of grete angwysshe that he suffred for the love of Ygerne, and they seiden, "What will ye that we shall do?" Quod the

kyng, "I wolde haue youre counseile, how I myght have her company." And they seide, "Yef ye go in to the courte ther as she is, the peple shull it a-perceyve, and so myght ye be in blame." And he seyde, "What counseile yeve ye me thanne?"

"The beste counseile," seide thei, "that we se ther-inne is that ye somowne a grete courte to be at Cardoel, and that ye make hem all to wite that it shall holde to the quynsine, and that eche come araide to a-bide xv dayes, and eueriche man to brynge with hym his wyf. And thus may ye have longe the company of Ygerne, and haue grete counfort of youre love." And the kyng was plesed wele with her counseile, and sente to alle the barons to be at Pentecoste at Cardoel, and euery baron to brynge with hym his wif. And as the kyng hem comaunded thei diden, and at that feeste the kyng bar crowne, and yaf grete yeftes to alle astates as hym semed beste sittyng.

They counsel him to summon a court for fifteen days,

by which means he would have the company of Ygerne.

He sends to all the barons.

He gives great gifts.

Gretly was the kyng at that feeste, and ioyfull and mery.

He is joyful and merry.

And he spake to oon of his counseile to whom he hadde moste truste of eny other, and his name was Vlfyn. And the kyng hym tolde of the grete peyne that he was Inne for the love of Ygerne, that so hym constrayned that he myght nother ete ne slepe, ne go, ne ride, and that he wende verily to dye whan he was oute of her sight, and that he myght not longe lyve but he hadde oþer counseile of her love. And Vlfyn seide, "Sir, it is a wonder thyng that for the delyte of a woman ye wene to dye. And I am but a pore man, and yef I loved a woman so strongly as ye, I sholde not wene therfore to dyen. Who herde euer speke of eny woman, yef she were wele requereth, but ye sholde haue of her youre volente; with that to yeve her gret yeftis<sup>1</sup> \*and Juwels, and to hem that ben a-bouten hir. I ne herde neuer speke of woman that cowde hir diffende a-geyn this; and thow that arte a kyng dismayest the so of feynt herte!" And the kyng seide, "Vlfyn, thow seyst right wele, and thow knowest wele what longeth to soche mystere; I pray the helpe me in alle maners that thow can or may, and take of my cofres

He tells Ulfyn of his love for Ygerne,

by which he was like to die.

Ulfyn counsels him

to give jewels to her and those about her,  
\*[Fol. 22a.]

and not to be of faint heart.

The king is pleased with his advice.

<sup>1</sup> Folio 22 is misplaced, and follows folio 23.

Ulfyn undertakes to help him.

The king gives the duke a great jewel.

Ulfyn speaks to Ygerne.

She will have none of his jewels.

He tells her she has the heart of the king.

She condemns the king,

and tells Ulfyn if he speaks to her again on this matter she will tell her husband.

He answers that no lady can refuse a king.

She says she will never come where the king is.

what thow wylte, to yeve to alle that ben hir a-bouten, and speke so to hir as thow knowest is for my spede." Quod Vlfyn, "Be of gode counfort, for I shall do all my power." And thus vndir-toke Vlfyn to helpe the kyng. And so all the xv dayes hilde the kyng grete feste, and euery day hadde the Duke in his company, and yaf hym a grete luwell, and also to his compers. And Vlfyn spake with Ygerne, and tolde hir many thinges that he myght, as he trowed beste her plesse; and many tymes he brought her a preciouss luwell; but Ygerne wolde noon [of hem],<sup>1</sup> till on a tyme that Ygerne hilde Vlfyn in counseile, and seide, "Vlfyn, wherefore is it that ye wolde me yeve alle these luwelles and these riche yeffes?" And Vlfyn seide, "Madame, for youre grete wisdom, and youre grete beaute and faire countenance, I may nocht yeve yow, for all erthely gode is yours, and alle the londe of logres, and alle the mennes bodyes at youre plesier to do youre volente." And she ansuerde, "How?" "How?" quod he, "for ye haue the herte of hym to whom alle moste obbeie." Quod she, "Whos herte is that ye of speken?" And Vlfyn seide, "Of the kyng." And she lifte vp hir hande, and hir fayned, and seide, "A mercy god! sholde eny knyge be traytour, so as he maketh semblaunce to myn husbonde of love, and so shamefully wolde me diffoule! Vlfyn, now be right well ware that thow neuer speke to me more of these wordes, ffor, wite thow wele, I shall telle my lorde, and yef he it knowe thow moste dye." And Vlfyn ansuerde, "That were to me grete wurship, yef I sholde dye for my lorde; ne neuer lady that refused a kyng in soche wyse as do ye, that loveth yow more than eny other thyng. And I trowe ye do but iape; but for goddes love haveth pite of the kyng that is youre lorde, and also vpon youre self, for yef ye haue no mercy of this thyng, witeth wele that ther-of may come grete harme, ne ye ne youre lorde may not yow diffende a-geyn the kynges wille." And Ygerne ansuerde, wepyng, "I shall therfore me right wele diffende, for I will neuer come in place wheras he may me seen."

<sup>1</sup> Illegible.

And so departed Ygerne; and Vlfin come to the kynge, and tolde hym like as she hadde seide. And the kynge seyde so sholde a gode lady ansuere, for ther was neuer gode lady that lightly wolde be ouercome; and therefore he ne cessed not of prayinge. And on the xi<sup>e</sup> iour of Pentecoste, the kynge satte at mete, and with hym the Duke of Tintagel. And the kynge hadde a riche cowpe of goolde; and Vlfin kneled be-fore the kynge, and seide, "Sir, sende this cuppe to Ygerne, and praye the Duke to bidde hir to take it, and drynke for youre love." And the kynge cleped the Duke, and badde hym sende that cuppe to Ygerne, his wif, and sende hir worde to drynke for his love. And the Duke ansuerde as he that thought noon euell, and seyde, "Sir, gramercy." The Duke cleped a knyght of his owne that he loved well, "Bertel, take this cuppe, and bere to thy lady, and sey her that she drynke for the kynges love." And Bertel cam in to the \*chamber where Ygerne sat at mete amonge othir ladyes, and kneled be-fore hir, and seide, "Madam, the kynge sente yow this cuppe, and my lorde comaundeth that ye sholde it take, and also to drynke for the kynges sake."

Whan the lady vndirstode these wordes, she wax all reade for shame, but she durste not refuse the comaundement of hir lorde, but toke the cuppe, and dranke, and wolde have sente it a-geyn be the same knyght. And he seide, "My lorde sente yow worde ye sholde it kepe, for so the kynge hym prayde." When she sye that, she sigh wele that nedes she muste kepe the cuppe. And Bretell come a-gein, and thanked the kynge on Ygernes be-halfe, that ther-of hadde seide no worde. And glad was the kynge that she hadde resceyved his yefte. And Vlfin wente in to the chamber, to se what semblaunce she made, and he fonde hir pensif and angry. And whan she saugh Vlfin, she cleped hym to hir, for the bourdes weren vp, and seide, "Vlfin, though grete treson thy lorde hath here sente me a cuppe, but therby shall he gete litill wurschip er to-morow day, for I will telle my lorde of the treson that ye be-twene yow two haue purposed." And Vlfin ansuerde, "Be-war ther-of, that it yow

Ulfin tells the king what she says.

The king gives a gold cup to the duke for him to send to his wife.

The duke gives it to Bertel to take to Ygerne.

\*[Fol. 22b.]

Bertel comes into her chamber and delivers the cup to her.

She grows red for shame, but does not refuse the cup.

Bretell returns and thanks the king on her behalf.

Ulfin goes to see Ygerne.

She complains of his treason, and says she shall tell her lord.

Ulfin tells her to be-ware.

neuer passe." And she seide, "Mysaventure have that it kepeth eny counseile." With that departed Vlfyn from hir. And be than the kynge hadde waisshe, and was right mery and gladd, and toke the Duke be the hande, and seide, gowe, so these ladyes. Than they yede to the chamber wher as Ygerne hadde eten; and she knewe wele that he come for noon othir cause but for hir. And so she suffred all the day till the nyght, and than she wente hom to hir loigynge. And when the Duke come he fonde hir wepyng and makynge grete sorow; wherfore he was right hevvy, and toke hir in his armes, as he that moche hir loved, and axed whi she made soche sorowe. "Trewly," quod she, "ther nothyng that I will kepe from yow counseile, for ther is nothyng that I love so moche as yow. The kynge that is my lorde and yowres seith that he loueth me, and alle these courtes that ye se hym holde, and alle these ladyes that he sendith fore, it is nought elles but for me, and that ye sholde bryng me with yow. And these othir tymes I parceyved it wele I-nough, and I me kepte bothe fro hym and from his yeftes. And so hiderto I haue me wele deffended, that I haue nought taken of his. And now haue ye made me to take a cuppe, and sente me that I sholde drynke for his love. And therfore I wolde I were deed, for I may neuer haue reste for hym, and Vlfyn hys counseiller. And now I haue tolde yow all as it is; I knowe wele that ther-of muste come more anger, wherfore I beseke yow, as I ought to do my lorde, that ye bryng me to Tintagel, for I will no lenger a-bide in this town." Whan the Duke, that moche loved his wif, herde this, he was als wroth as eny man myght be. Than he sente after his men thourgh the town, and when they were come, he seide to hem prevely, "Make yow redy for to ride in all haste, so that no man of the town it wyte, \*and axed not the cause why till I telle yow." And thus the Duke and his knyghtes lepe to horse, and rode home to his contre, and ledde with hym his wyf.

On the morowe, whan the kynge wiste the Duke was thus i-gon, he was hevvy and sorowfull for that he hadde ledde a-wey Ygerne, and sente after his counseile, and shewde hem the

The king and the duke go to see her.

She goes home.

The duke finds her weeping.

She tells him of the king's love for her,

and the reason why the king sent her the cup.

She asks her husband to take her back to Tintagel.

The duke is very wroth at the news.

He sends for his men,

\*[Fol. 23a.]

and returns to his own country.

The king is sorrowful for the loss of Ygerne, and sends for his council.



shame and the dispite the Duke hadde hym don. And they seide they merveyled ther gretly, and that hadde don grete folye. Thus seide they that wiste not why he was gon. And the kynge seide, "As ye haue sen alle, I haue do to hym more wurship than to eny othir." And they seiden, "It was soth; wherfore we gretly merveyle why he hath don so grete outhrage." And the kynge seide, "Yef it be youre rede I will sende after hym that he come a-geyn and a-mende this forfet, and that in the same wise as he is gon that he come a-gein, for that me semeth is right." And the counseile ther-to assented. On this message was sente two worthy men fro the kynge, and rode till they come to Tintagell, and ther they fonde the Duke, and tolde hym their message as they weren charged. Whan the Duke herde that in the same forme he moste come a-geyn, he vndirstode wele he sholde bringe with hym Ygerne, and than he seide to the messagers, "I ne will not come at his courte, for he hath so don to me and to myne that I owe hym neyther to truste ne to love." And thus departed the messagers with-uten other ansuere. And than the Duke sente after alle the worthy men of his counseile, and seide hem the cause why he was come fro Cardoel, and the vntrouthe and the shame that the kynge hadde hym purposed. And they ther-of merveileden gretly, and seide that sholde neuer be-tyden with goddes grace, and wele oughten he to haue shame that this shame hath purposed to his liege man. Thanne seide the Duke, "I pray yow, and requyre be the feith that ye me owen, that ye helpe me to diffende my londe yef he me assawte with werre." And thei ansuerde that so wolde they do to put alle ther lyves and godes in Iepardye. Thus the Duke counseiled with his men. And the messagers come to Cardoel and fonde the kynge and his barons, and tolde as the Duke hadde yeve hem ansuere; and they seiden alle, thei merveiled of the Duke, that was wonte to be so wise a man, and so had him ruled. The kynge praide his barons, and hem requyred as his liege men, that thei wolde hym helpe to redresse that forfet, and a-venge the shame that he hadde hym don; and they seiden that they myght not that refusen; but thei seiden

He asks them if he should send after him.

They agree thereto.

The king sends two worthy men to Tintagell.

The duke refuses to return to court.

He sends for his counselors,

and tells them why he left Cardoel.

He prays them to help him defend his land.

The messengers return to Cardoel, and tell the king the duke's answer.

The king prays his barons to assist him.

They say  
they cannot  
refuse him,  
but desire  
that he send  
word to the  
duke.

The king  
sends mes-  
sengers to  
defy the  
duke,

who sends to  
his people for  
help.

\*[Fol. 23b.]  
The duke  
has only two  
castles.

He leaves his  
wife at Tin-  
tagel,

and goes  
himself to  
another  
castle which  
is not so  
strong.

The king's  
messengers  
return to  
him.  
He summons  
his barons to  
assemble,

and destroys  
the duke's  
country.

He asks his  
council  
which castle  
he shall first  
assail.  
The barons  
advise him  
to assail the  
duke.  
The king  
asks Ulfyn's  
advice.

yef it were hys plesier to sende, knowynge that he hym diffied, xl dayes be-fore er he hym assailed. And the kynge seide that wolde he do; but the kynge hem praide that at the ende of xl dayes they be redy assembled ther he hem assigned arayed for to osteve. The kynge sente his messagers for to diffie the Duke of Tintagel; and when the Duke herde that he hym diffied at the ende of xl dayes, he seide he sholde hym diffende yef he myght. And than he sente to his peple, and shewde hem the diffiaunce of the kynge, prayinge hem to helpe hym in that grete mister. And they seide thei sholde hym helpe with all their power. And than the Duke counseiled with his peple, \*and seide, "I have but two castelles that a-gein the kynge may holde; but tho tweyne wolde he holde as longe as he hadde lyf." And he devised to leve his wif at Tintagel, and with hir x knyghtes, for he knewe that castell hadde no doute of no man, and hym-self wente to a-nother castell that was of lesse strengthe, and it stuffed in the beste wise that he myght, and seide that he myght not his other londes agein hym diffende. The messagers that hadde the Duke diffied come to the kynge, and seide how the Duke wolde hym diffende. Thanne the kynge sente to somowne his barons and his peple, and made hem alle to assemble in the Dukes londe in a grete medowe vpon a rivere. Whan the barons were assembled, the kynge to hem rehersed the grete dyspyte of brekynge of his courte, and the barons seiden it was reson that the forfet were redressed. Thus the kynge lefte in the Dukes londes, and toke his castelles and his townes, and distroyed all the contre, and than the kynge herde sey that Ygerne was at Tintagel, and the Duke in a-nother castell, and than the kynge axed of his counseile whiche castell he sholde firste assaile; and the barons yaf hym counseile firste to assaile the Duke, and therto the kynge graunted. And so thei rode to the castell that the Duke was ynne; and than the kynge seide to Vlfyn, "What may I do whan I ne may not se Ygerne?" And Vlfyn seide, "The thinges that a man may not haue, he muste nede suffer; and therefore ye must put to grete besynesse to take the Duke, for after that ye shall well to purpos bringe the remenaunt."

Many assaute made the kynge at the Castell, but he cowde it in no wise gete, wherfore he was full of sorowe, and right Irouse. And on the tother side he was sore distreined with the love of Ygerne, that on a tyme, as he was in his pavilion, he gan to wepe. Whanne his peple saugh hym wepe, they weren hevy, and hem with-drowen, and leften hym a-lone. And whan Vlfin it wiste ther-of, he come anon, and axed the kynge why he wepte. And the kynge seide, "Thow knowest wele wherfore, for thow woste wele that I dye full of loue of Ygerne, for I have loste bothe mete and drynke, and all reste that a man ought to have." And whan Vlfin this vndirstode, he seide, "Ye be of ful febill herte whan ye thynke to dye for oon sole woman; but I shall sey yow gode counseile." "What is that?" seide the kynge. "That ye wolde sende to seche Merlin, that he myght come to yow, and it myght noon other-wise be, but that he sholde yeve yow some gode counseile that sholde yow profite. And ye shull hym yeve what he will desire." And than seide the kynge, "Ther is no thyng that is possible to a man but that he can it do; but I wote wele Merlin of my distresse knoweth, and so I am in drede that he be wroth for the voide place of the table, that I suffred to be assaide. And longe tyme it is passed sethe he was in place, where-as I myght hym se. And also I trowe he is not well plesed that I love the wif of my liege man; but trewly I may not do ther-to, ne I ne may not therfro me deffende. But I have well in mynde that he badde I sholde not sende hym for to seche." And Vlfin ansuerde, "I am in certeyn of oon thyng, that he farith well and is in hele. Yef he love yow as he was wonte to do, he knoweth what distresse that ye beth ynne, and it shall \*not be longe er ye here of hym tydynge."

Thus Vlfin counforted the kynge, and counseiled hym to sende for his meyne to hym, and that sholde cause hym to foryete a grete partie of his sorowe. And the kynge seyde so he wolde do; but his love myght he, ne his sorow in no maner wise for-gete. Thus the kynge peyned to conforte hym-self and his peple, and made the castell to be assailed; but take

He cannot take the castle.

He weeps for his love of Ygerne.

Ulfyn asks him why he weeps,

and tells him he has a faint heart to think of dying for one woman. He advises him to send for Merlin.

The king fears Merlin is wroth with him,

and tells Ulfyn that he must not send for him.

\*[Fol. 24a.]

Ulfyn comforts the king.

The castle is assailed, but they cannot take it.

Ulfyn meets  
a man who  
speaks to  
him.

The old man  
tells Ulfyn  
that he heard  
of the king's  
love for  
Ygerne at  
Tintagel,

and that he  
can make him  
acquainted  
with one who  
can get him  
to speak with  
Ygerne.

He asks what  
reward the  
king will  
give.

Ulfyn comes  
to the king to  
tell him.

The king  
laughs,

and says he  
will go with  
him to meet  
the man.

it they myght not in no wise. And on a day, as Vlfyn rode thourgh the oste, he mette with a man that he nothinge kenned. And he seide, "Vlfyn, I wolde fain sp[e]ke with the." And thanne they yede oute of the hoste, the man on his fete, and Vlfyn on horsebak. And Vlfyn light down on foote to sp[e]ke with this man, and hym axed what he was. And he seide, "I am an olde man, as thow maist se, and som tyme in my yowthe I was holden wise; and now of moche thinge that I sey men sein that I dote; but I sey to yow in counseile that I was at Tintagel not longe sithe, and ther I was a-queynted with a gode man, that tolde me that youre kynge loueth the Dukes wif, and that is the cause that the kynge distroyeth his contre, for he brought his wif fro Cardoel. And yef ye and the kynge will wele quyte my nede, I shall make yow a-queynte with a gode man that shall make yow speke mith Ygerne, and that shall wele counseile the kynge of his desir." When Vlfyn herde this man so say, he merveled who that hym sholde haue tolde, and prayde hym that he wolde teche hym to that man that cowde counseile the kynge of his desires. And the olde man seide, "I will first here what rewarde the kinge will yeve." Quod Vlfyn, "Where shall I yow fynde when I haue spoke with the kynge?" The olde man seide, "Ye shull finde me or my message be-twene this and the hoste." And so he hym com-aunded to god, and bad hym come on the morowe, and hym wolde telle soche tydinges as sholde hym plese. And Vlfyn com to the kynge as hastily as he myght, and tolde how the olde man hadde seide. And whan the kynge hadde herde these wordes, he lowgh and made feire semblaunce, and seide to Vlfyn, "Knowest thow ought the man that thow spake with?" And he ansuerde, "It is a man right olde and feble." And the kynge seide, "Whan shull ye mete este to-geder?" And Vlfyn seide, "In the morowe, for he badde me wite of yow what he shulde haue to rewarde." And the kynge seide, "Lede me thider as thow shalt mete with hym." And Vlfyn seide, "With gode will; and yef thow speke with hym with-oute me, profer hym what he will desire of myn." Thus thei leften till on the

morowe; but that nyght was the kyng merier than he hadde ben eny tyme be-fore.

The morowe after masse the kyng and Vlfyn rode forth as Vlfyn wolde hym guyde; and as thei issued oute of the hoste thei sye a crepell that semed blinde; and as thei passed forth by hym, he cried with an high voyce, "Sir kyng, so god a-complisshe thyn hertys desire of that thow desirest moste to haue, so yeve me som thyng that I may conne the thanke fore." \*And the kyng be-heilde Vlfyn, and seide lawghinge, and seide, "Vlfyn, "Do that I shall comaunde the for my grete profite, and for my love, and for to compleisshe my grete desire." And Vlfyn seide, "Ther is nothinge that I desire so moche, as for to do that myght a-complisshe youre desire." And the kyng seide, "Hast thow nought herde what the Crepell axed, that I sholde remembre the thinge that I beste loved in this worlde, and that I am moste desiraunte. Go and sette the a-down by hym, and sey þat I haue sente the to hym, and ther is nothinge in this worlde that I haue in possession, but that I wolde come to yeve it hym, yef I durste come to se hym." And Vlfyn, with-oute eny grucchynge, yede and yaf hym-self to the Crepill, and sette hym down by hym. And whan the crepill felte Vlfyn, he axed what he was, and what he was come for to seche. And he ansuerde, "The kyng hath sente me to yow, and that I sholde euer be youre." And whan the crepill that herde, he lowgh, and seide to Vlfyn, "The kyng is sone perceyvinge, and me knoweth better than do ye. I will that thow wite that the olde man that thow spake with yesterday sente me to the; but I will not telle the what he seyde. Go to the kyng, and sey he wolde do a grete thyng for to haue his desire, and that I sende hym worde that sone he is perceyvinge, and he shall spede the better." And Vlfyn seide, "I dar nought aske what ye ben." "Aske the kyng," quod the crepill, "and he shall telle the wele i-nough." And Vlfyn lepe on horse, and priked after the kyng. And whan the kyng saugh hym come, he drough a-side, and seide, "Vlfyn, is it that thow art come after me; ne have I not yove the to the Crepill?" Quod Vlfyn, "He seith that ye be sone aperceyvaunte of hym, and

On the morrow the king and Vlfyn ride forth. They see a blind cripple, who cries out to them.

\*[Fol. 24b.]

The king desires Vlfyn to go and speak to the cripple.

Vlfyn sits down by the cripple,

who tells him that the old man sent him,

and tells him to ask the king who he is.

Vlfyn goes back to the king,

and asks him  
who the cripple  
is.

The king  
tells Ulfyn  
that the old  
man and the  
cripple are  
the same,

and they are  
both Merlin.

Merlin comes  
to the king's  
tent in his  
right sem-  
blance.

The king  
speaks to  
Ulfyn,

who tells him  
there is no  
man can help  
him so well  
to the love of  
Ygerne as  
Merlin.

They ride to  
the tent,  
where they  
find Merlin,

\*[Fol. 25a.]

The king  
tells Merlin  
that he has  
longed to see  
him.

Merlin tells  
Ulfyn that he  
was the old  
man and the  
cripple.

that ye sholde telle me what he is, for he wolde not telle me, but seide ye sholde telle wele i-nough." Than seide the kynge, "Wost thou what olde man that was that spake with the yesterday? that same is this that thou haste seyn a crepill." And Vlfyn seide, "May this be true, that oo[n] man may hym-self thus disfigure? And what is he than that thus hym disfigureth?" And the kynge ansuerde, "Knowe it verily it is Merlin, that thus hym kepeth fro yow. And whan he will, he will make yow wele to knowe that it is thus." Thus they passed forth thourgh the feilde; and Merlin come in his right semblaunce in to the kynges teynte, and asked where was the kynge. And a messenger come to the kynge, and seide Merlin was come; and than was the kynge so gladde that he myght not ansuere, but in all haste returned, and cleped Vlfyn, and seide, "Now shalt thou knowe yef it be so as I haue seide, for Merlyn is comen, and I knowe wele that he doth not seke me for nought." And than seide Vlfyn, "Now shall it be sene yef euer ye were ought wroth, and yef ye can other do well or sey to his plesire of alle thinges; for ther is no man that may yow helpe so wele to haue the love of Ygerne." And the kynge seide, "Thow seiste soth, and ther is no thyng that he doth comaunde me but I shall it gladly performe."

Thus thei rode till thei come to the teynte where as thei fonde Merlin, and the kynge hym made grete ioye and mery chere, and ran hym a-gein with armes spred a-brode, and hym halsed and seide he was the man in all the worlde that was moste to hym welcome; \*and than he seide, "Wherto sholde I me complayne vn-to yow, for as ye it knowe as my-self, and ther was neuer man that I longed so sore after, and I pray yow and requyre telle me of that ye knowe my herte desireth so." And Merlin seide, "Of that ye me asken I shall not speke withoute Vlfyn." Than made the kynge to clepe after Vlfyn, and droughen hem a-side in counseile. Than seide the kynge to Merlin, "I haue tolde Vlfyn of that ye comaunded, and that ye were the old man that he sigh yesterday, and also the crepill this day." And Vlfyn be-heilde hym strongly, and seide, "May

this be trewe that the kyng seith?" And Merlin seide, "Ye, it is trewe with-uten faile; and as sone as I saugh he sente the to me I wiste well he hadde me perceyved." And than Vlfyn seide to the kyng, "Sir, now sholde ye speke of youre gref, and not wepe whan ye ben soill." And the kyng seide, "I wote not what to sey ne preyen: he knoweth well my corage, and I may not make hym no lesynge, but he it knowe as wele a[s] I; but I pray hym hertely to helpe me to haue the love of Ygerne, and he ne shall devise nothinge that is to me possible but that I shall it gladly don." And Merlin seide, "Yef ye will graunte me that I shall aske, I shall purchace yow hir love, and make yow to ly in here chamber and in hir bedde, bothe naked." And Vlfyn that herde, he lough and seide, "Now shall I se what a mannes herte is worth." And the kyng seide to Merlin, "Ye can not aske me nothinge that be founden in this worlde, but I sholde it yow yeven." And Merlin ansuerde, "How may I here-of be sure, but yef ye be sworn, and also lete Vlfyn swere, that I shall haue that I aske on the morn that ye haue leye with Ygerne, and don with hir youre beste?" And the kyng seide, "That wolde he do with gode will." And Merlin asked Vlfyn yef he wolde swere, and Vlfyn seide, "That me for-thinketh, for I was neuer yet sworn in no tyme."

**W**hen Merlin herde that worde, he lough and seide, "Whan youre othes be made, I shall telle yow how it shall be." Than the kyng made be brought the hiest seintewaries that he hadde, and the beste relikes, and ther-on they dide swere as Merlin dide hem devyse, and thei seiden thei sholde it feithfully holde with-uten fraude or mal engyn. After the kyng swore Vlfyn, and thus hath Merlin taken their othes. And than seide the kyng, "Merlin, now I requere yow sone to helpe myn hertes desire, as the man of all the worlde that moste ther-after longeth to haue it complished." And than seide Merlyn, "Ye muste be wisely demened, for she is a trewe lady and full wise, and trewe to god and to hir lorde; but now shall ye se what power I haue hir to be-gile, for I shall make yow semblaunce of the Duke so wele, that ther is no man that yow doth sen but he

The king prays Merlin to help him to the love of Ygerne.

Merlin tells the king that if he will grant what he asks, he will get him the love of Ygerne.

The king tells Merlin there is nothing in the world he would not give him.

Merlin asks Ulfyn if he will swear.

The king and Ulfyn are sworn.

The king requires Merlin to perform his promise.

Merlin tells the king that he will make him to bear the semblaunce of the duke,

and he himself will take the semblance of Bretel, and Ulfyn of Iordan.

They must leave early on the morrow.

\*[Fol. 25b.]

They come near to Tintagell.

Merlin takes a herb to the king for him to rub his face and hands with, by which he becomes like the duke.

He then transforms Ulfyn to the semblance of Iordan.

Merlin becomes like to Bretel.

They come to the castle gate.

shall wene it be the Duke. And two knyghtes that ben moste privy with hym, that noon ne knoweth so moche of his counseile, not Ygerne her-silf; and that oon hight Bretell, and that other Iordan; and I shall haue the semblaunce of Bretel, and Vlfyn shall be like Iordan, and so shall I make hem to open the gates of the castell, and we shull alle thre ly with-Inne; but full erly on the morow we moste gon oute, for er we departe thens we shall here straunge tidinges, and therfore a-ray youre oste and your barons, and comaunde hem to make gode wacche to diffende hem-self, and that noon of hem ne go towarde the castell till that ye be come a-geyn, and be well ware that ye telle no creature wheder that ye shall go." And Vterpendragon dide as Merlin hadde devised, and a-noon com agein, and seide that he was redy, and Merlin seide how he was also redy, "there is not ellis but to spede vs forward," and so thei wenten forth alle thre till thei com ner at Tintagell, and than seide Merlyn to the kyng, "A-bye ye here, and I and Vlfyn shall go this wey." And than eche drough a-side by hym-self; and whan thei were disseuered, and Merlin hadde don his art, he toke an herbe, and brought it to the kyng, and seide, "Frote youre visage with this herbe, and youre handes." And the kyng toke the herbe, and rubbid his handes, and his visage, and his feet; and anoon, as he hadde thus I-don, he hadde aperteliche the semblaunce of the Duke. And than seide, Merlyn, "Haue ye eny mynde that euer ye saugh Iordan?" And the kyng seide, "Ye, I knowe hym wele." And Merlyn com to Vlfyn, and transfigured hym to the semblaunce of Iordan, and than sente hym to the kyng. And whan the kyng saugh Vlfyn, he hym blissed, and seide, "Mercy god! how may eny man make oon man so like a-nother?" And than he seide to Vlfyn, "How semeth the be me?" And Vlfyn seide, "I knowe yow nought but for the Duke." And the kyng seide, he was verily like vn-to Iordan. And as thei stoden, so thei be-heilde Merlyn, and thei semed verily it was Bretel. And thus thei speken to-geder, and taried till it was nyght, and in the evenynge thei come to the Castell gate. And Merlyn, that wele resembled to bretel, cleped the porter, and the peple com to the



gate, and saugh apertly the Duke, as hem semed; and thei seide, "Open: lo, here the duke." And thei dought it was Bretel and Iurdan, and whan thei weren entred, Bretel diffended, "that no man in the place sholde not wite that the Duke was comen." I-nowe ther were that yede to telle the Duchesse. And Merlyn toke the kyng in counseile, and seide that he sholde contene hym-self myrily. And a-noon alle thre thei come be-fore the chambir where Ygerne that yet was in her bedde; and in all haste that thei myght, thei mad their lorde redy. And so ha yede to bedde to Ygerne; and that nyght he gat vpon hir the gode kyng that after was cleped Arthur. The lady made grete ioye of the kyng, for she wende verily it hadde ben the Duke hir lorde, that she loved moche with a trewe herte. Thus thei lay to-geder, till on the morowe, in the dawninge, the tidinges com in to the town that the Duke was dede, and also his stewarde I-take. And than thei com full previly in; and when these other tweyn that tho were a-risen, herde these tidynges, thei ran ther as their lorde lay, and seide, "A-ryse vp, and go to youre castell, for ther be soche tydynges come hider, that oure peple wene that ye be deed." And he lepe vp, and seide, "It is no merveyle though they wene so; ffor I yede oute of the castell that no man knewe ther-of no worde." A-noon he toke leve of Ygerne, and hir kiste, seyng hem alle at her departyng. And thus they departed oute of the castell in all the haste they myght, that neuer oon ne knewe but [it]<sup>1</sup> was the Duke. And whan they weren oute, thei weren right gladde. And Merlyn seide to the kyng, "Sir, haue ye kept wele the couenawnte?<sup>2</sup> now, loke thow kepe as wele myne." And the kyng seide, "Ye sey trewe, for ye haue don me the beste servise that euer man dide to a-nother; and \*therefore youre couenawntes shall I well holde." And Merlyn seide, "I hem aske now, and will that they be holden." And the kyng seide, "I am redy hem to performe." And than seide Merlyn, "I will that thow knowe that thow haste engendred an heyre male on Ygerne, and that hast thow me yoven; and ther-

They come to Ygerne's chamber.

The king that night gets on her the good king Arthur.

The news of the death of the duke comes to the town.

The king takes leave of Ygerne.

The three depart out of the castle in haste.

Merlin demands his promise of the king.

\*[Fol. 26a.] He says that he requires the king to give him the child he has begotten on Ygerne when it is born.

<sup>1</sup> This word is written "is" in the MS.

<sup>2</sup> This word is spelt "comenfit" in the MS.

fore I shall write the houre and the day in the whiche it is begeten, and so shalt thou knowe yef I sey soth." Quod the kynge, "As thou hast seide, I haue sworn, and I yeve it the with gode will."

Merlin washes them in the river, by which they have their proper semblance again.

The barons come to the king, and tell him of the death of the duke.

Encounter between the king's and the duke's forces.

The king is sorry for the death of the duke.

Thus they rode till they come to a rivere, and ther Merlyn did hem waisschen, and than hadde thei semblaunce as that thei hadden be-fore. And than the kynge rode forth as faste as he myght; and as sone as he was come his barons and his peple gedered a-boute hym. And he hem asked how the Duke was deed. And thei hym tolden, "The day when ye were departed the oste was stille and koye; and therby the duke vndirstode that ye were not in the oste, and dide his peple to arme, and come vpon vs, and dide vs grete damage er we myghten ben armed. The cry a-rose and the noyse, and oure meynnee hem arayde, and set on hem, and drof hem a-geyn, even be-fore the yate. And ther the duke a-bode, and dide many maistries in armes. And ther was his horse slayn and the Duke ouerthrowe, and ther was he deed amonge oure peple on foote, that hym nought knewen. And we driven the remenaunt in at the yates, that sympilly hem deffended whan they hadde loste their lorde." And the kynge seide he was right sory for the deth of the Duke.

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## CHAPTER V.

MARRIAGE OF THE KING WITH YGERNE; BIRTH OF ARTHUR;  
AND DEATH OF THE KING.

Thus was the Duke of Tintagel deed, and the castell loste.

The king speaks with his barons,

who blame him not.

The king offers to make amends.

The kynge spake to his barons, and seide that sore hym for thought the myschaunce of the Duke. And the kynge toke a-visement of his counseile how he myght this thinge a-mende. And his barons ne blamede hym nought, though he did not hate the duke dedly, and that he were hevy for the mysauenture. "Truly," seide the kynge, "to my power I wolde fain make the

a-mendes." Than spake Vlfyn, and seide, "Sir, seth this a-venture is thus be-fallen, it moste be a-mended in the beste wise it may." Than Vlfyn toke a-part the barons, and seide, "How seme ye that this myght be amended a-geyn the lady and a-geyn the Dukes frendes, wherof the kynge asketh yow counseile. And ye moste counseile hym the beste to youre power as youre lorde." And thei seiden, "We wolde gladly rede hym the beste, and therefore we pray yow to yeve vs counseile for oure moste wurship how we myght beste be demened in this matere, that the kynge forsake not oure counseile; for we knowe wele that ye are well in his grace." And Vlfyn seide, "Yef I be wele in his grace, trow ye that I sholde counseile a thyng be-hynde hym that I sholde not sey be-fore hym; than holde ye me for a traytour yef I sholde be soche. And yef the pees and the a-mendement to the lady lay in me, I wolde rede hym soche thinges that ye ne durste not thynken." And they seide, "We trowe yow wele, and wele we knowe that ye be wise and trewe, and of gode counseile; and therfore we pray yow to connseile vs what were beste to requere the kynge ynne, after that we have sein and knowe verily." And Vlfyn seide, "I shall sey yow myn avise, and yef ye can better, sey it ye. I rede the kynge sende after alle the Dukes frendes, and that \*the kynge go to Tintagel, and make alle the ladies frendes to come also be-fore hym. And whan they beth come be-fore hym, that he profer for the pees and a-mendes for the Dukes deth, that yef they it refusen, that thei be holde for foles, and he for a wise man and a trewe. In this wise, he that wele haue pees, it moste be made." And thei that were wise seide, "We holde vs to youre counseile, ne neuer for vs shall he haue other." Than they come be-fore the kynge, and seiden the counseile that thei hadde founden; but thei ne seide not that Vlfyn hadde it hem yoven, for so he hem hadde praide and required. And þus as he hadde hem enformed they seide be-fore the kynge. And the kynge seide to this, "I a-corde me well, and will that it be so as ye haue devised." And than the kynge sente to alle the Dukes kenrede, and alle by letteres, that thei sholde come to hym to Cardoel, and yaf gode tr[e]wys,

Ulfyn speaks  
to the barons,

and tells  
them that  
the king asks  
for their  
counsel.

They pray  
him to give  
them counsel  
what they  
shall say.

Ulfyn asks  
them if they  
take him for  
a traitor.

They tell him  
they know  
him to be  
wise and  
true, there-  
fore they  
pray him to  
counsel  
them.

Ulfyn says  
the king  
\*[Fol. 26b.]  
should send  
after all the  
duke's  
friends,  
and proffer  
them peace  
and amends.

The barons  
come before  
the king and  
counsel him  
as Ulfyn had  
told them.

The king  
says it shall  
be as they  
have devised,  
and he sends  
for all the  
duke's kin-  
dred.

Merlin tells  
the king who  
gave this  
counsel,

and says that  
Ulfyn is a  
wise and true  
knight.

The king  
asks Merlin  
for his ad-  
vice, and he  
praises Ul-  
fyn's counsel.

Merlin  
wishes to  
speak with  
the king be-  
fore Ulfyn.

Merlin re-  
minds the  
king of his  
promise re-  
specting the  
child that is  
to be born.

He believes  
the mother  
will be a-  
shamed of it,

and wills that  
Ulfyn make a  
record that  
he is to have  
it. He tells the  
king that he  
shall not see  
him till after  
the child is  
born,

but he will  
speak with  
Ulfyn.

and that he sholde a-mende alle the fautes wherof thei cowde hem complayne. Thus seide the kynge be-fore alle his barons, and so departed fro the castell. And Merlin com to the kynge, and seide, "Wite ye who hath yove this counseile that ye haue comaunded." And the kynge seide, "Nay, but that the nobill men and wise me dide reden." And Merlyn seide, "Amonge hem alle thei cowde nought haue dought this rede, but Vlfyn that is wise and a trewe knyght hath ordeyned all this pees, and the beste orde-nance that eny can thynke. And wite it wele that no man knoweth it, saue he and ye and I that he hath it seide." And than seide the kynge to Merlyn, "And how rede ye of this thinge?" Quod Merlin, "I knowe no better counseile, ne more trewe; and so shalt thou a-complisse thy desere of thyn herte that thou art moste desiraunt. And now I muste go, but first I shall speke with the be-fore Vlfyn. And whan I am go, thou maiste aske Vlfyn how he hath dought in makynge of this pees." And the kynge seide so wolde he don.

Than was Vlfyn cleped; and whan he was come be-fore them two, Merlyn seide to the kynge, "Ye haue yove me be your power the heyer that ye haue be-geeten, and therfore it is no reson that ye kepe hym to youre vse. And ye haue also the hour and the tyme I-writen that was in engendred. And ye knowe also that it was do be me, and so sholde myn be the synne; but I dede it helpe, for I trowe the moder ther-of sholde be sore a-schamed yef she her-silf dide it norish; and a woman hath no witte ageins that she may not hiden, and a-gein the worlde. And therfore I will that Vlfyn make a letter of recorde that I shall hym haue, and the houre and the nyght that he was in engen-dred. And ye shall no more se me be-fore that day that he shalbe born, the nexte nyght after. And I pray yow, as my lorde, that ye truste well to Vlfyn, of that he shall sey vnto yow, for he loveth yow full trewly, ne he shall not rede yow no-thinge but for youre profite and grete wurship. And I shall no more speke with yow these vj monethes, but I shall speke to Vlfyn, and therfore do be hys counseile, yef thou wilt holde trouth, and haue my love fro hens-forth."

In this maner kepte Vlfyn the recorde of the engenderinge of the childe. And Merlin toke the kynge in counseile, and seide, "Sir, thow shalt haue Ygerne in mariage; but be wel ware that she ne knowe not that thow leyn by her, and that is a thinge that moste shall make hir \*in thy mercy, ffor yef thow aske hir be whom that she is grete, she can not telle the who is the fader, and so shall she haue of the grete shame; and also that is a thinge that may beste helpe me to haue the childe." And than Merlin toke leve of the kynge, and the kynge rode forth his iourneyes till he come to Cardoel. And Merlin wente to Blase, and tolde hym alle these thinges, and many other, and alle he wrote in his boke. And whan the kynge was come to Cardoel, he sente after the men of hys counseile, and asked what was their rede in this thinge. And thei seide, "We rede that ye make pees with the duchesse, and with the frendes of the Duke; and thei may well lete hir knowe that she may not hir diffende agein yow, and that ye will do hem grete wurship to have pees with hem; and also comaunde to go to Tintagel, to speke with the duchesse, and with the Dukes frendes, and loke yef thei will haue this pees; and yef youre counsailers a-corden, ye shull do as thei desire." Thus wente the barons to Tintagel; and the kynge a-bode at Cardoel, and toke Vlfyn in counseile, and asked asked hym what he redde in this mater. And he seide his rede was to haue pees. And the kynge seide, "Vlfyn, thow haste this pees ordeyned in thyn herte, and I wote well what." And Vlfyn seide, "Yef I haue it purposed, and ye it knowen, than wite ye whether it plesse yow or no?" And the kynge seide, "It plesith me wele, and wolde fain it were don as thow haste it devised in thy herte." And Vlfyn seide, "Ne entermete not yow to profer, ne to sone to graunten, for I shall it wele bringe to gode ende." And the kynge prayed ther-to hertely. Thus haue thei endid their counseile. And the kynges massagers come to Tintagel, and fonde the duchesse and the frendes of the duke. And ther thei shewde their massage, and how that the duke was deed thourgh hys owne outrage, and seide also how the kynge was therefore right sory, and gladly wolde make

Merlin tells the king that he shall have Ygerne in marriage, but he must not tell her that he has  
\*[Fol. 27a.]  
been with her.

He takes leave of the king, who rides to Cardoel.  
Merlin goes to Blase.

The king sends for his council.

They advise him to make peace with the duchess,

and send them to Tintagel.

The barons go to Tintagel.

The king tells Vlfyn that he knows he ordained this peace.

Vlfyn asks the king if it pleases him.

The king's messengers come to Tintagel,

and tell of the king's sorrow.

They counsel the lady and the friends of the duke to make peace.

The lady's friends counsel the friends of the duke to have peace with the king.

The duchess agrees to their counsel.

One of the worthiest of the lady's friends speaks to the king's messengers, and asks what amends the king will make. The messengers say they do not know the will of the king,

\*[Fol. 27b.] but advise that the lady and her friends shall come before the king.

The messengers return to the king, and tell him what they have done.

The king remains at Cardoel.

He sends for the duchess.

a-mendement to the lady, and to alle his frendes. And thei saugh wele that thei myght not deffende hem agein the kynges wratth, and therfore thei counseiled the lady and the frendes of the Duke to haue pees with the kyng. And the lady seide, and hir frendes, thei wolde take counseile. And so they wente togeder; and the ladyes frendes counseiled the frendes of the duke to haue pees with the kyng, and that he was slayn also by his owne outrage. "And also, ye knowe wele, we may not vs deffende agein the kyng; but lete vs here thise worthi men what pees that the kyng will make with vs. And in soche maner it may be that it ought not to be refused, for of two euelles it is gode to take the lesse; and this is oure counseile." And the duchesse seide, "I will not refuse the rede of yow that beth the frendes of my gode lorde; ne I ne knowen not whom I sholde so wele love and truste." And thus thei com oute from this counseile."

And than spake oon of the worthiest and moste wise that was on the ladies side to the kynges messagers, and seide these wordes, "Sirs, my ladyes counseile and she wolde gladly witen what a-mendes the kyng wolde do of hir lorde that is deed?" And the messagers seyden a-noon, "Lordinges, we knowe not the will of the kyng, but thus moche he hath seide, that he will a-mende it be the a-vise and counseile of his barons." And than seide they, "He shall it a-menden wele, yef god will." Than toke they day till the quynsyne that the lady and hir frendes \*sholde come be-fore the kyng, for to haue right, and to here what the kyng wolde sey, and yef the kynges profer myght not agre the lady, and also hir frendes, thei hadde saf condite to returne to Tintagel. Thus was take the day of a-mendement. And messagers com to the kyng, and seide as thei hadde founden, and the counseile that the lady hadde. And the kyng seide thei sholde haue conduyte with gode will, yef thei aske reson. In this manere soiourned the kyng all that woke at Cardoel, and spake be-twene hym and Vlfn of many thinges. And at the quynsyne, be counseile of his barons, he sente to the duchesse conduyte. And whan she was come, the kyng made

aske of the lady<sup>1</sup> and hir counseile, what a-mendes she required for the deth of hir lorde. The ladyes counseile ansuerde and seide, "Sir, my lady is not comen to aske a-mendes, but for to here what shall be don to hir for the deth of hir lorde." And thei that the kynge hadde made aske this demande, come to the kynge, and seide as thei hadden herde. And than the kynge prased gretly theire wise ansuere; and than the kynge asked his barons and his counseile, "What is youre rede in this mater?" And thei seide, "That may no man knowe, saf youre-self, what pees ye will make with hem, ne what ye will hem offre." And the kynge seide, "I shall sone haue tolde yow the thought of myn herte; ye be alle my men and of my counseile, and therefore I put it all vpon yow, and kepe ye myn honour as ye owe to do. And what ye ordeyne I shall it not denye." And they seide, "More may we not asken; but this is yet a grete thinge that we dar it not vndirtake; but we be right sure that ye shall vs come no magre." And Vlfyn seide, "It semeth that ye holde the kynge a fole, whan ye leve no thinge that he seith vnto yow." And thei seide, "Yesse, we trow hym wele; but we besече the kynge that he comaunde yow to ben oon of vs, and to helpe vs to counseile by yowre advyse in the beste wyse that ye can."

Whan the kynge herde hem desire Vlfyn to be of here counseile, he made semblance as he hadde be gladde, and seide to Vlfyn, "I have norshid the, and made the a riche man, and I knowe wele thow art wise; go forth and counseile hem the beste that thow canste or mayste." And he ansuerde, "So shall I do, seth ye me comaunden; but this I will that ye knowe, that ther is no kynge ne prince that may be to moche be-loved of his peple, ne he may not to moche obbeye hym-self for to haue theire hertes." Thus wente Vlfyn to counseile a-monge the barons and the worthy men. And whan thei were come to-geder they asked the best rede in this cas. And Vlfyn seide, "Ye haue wele herde how the kynge hath put hym vpon yow; now lete vs go to

The lady's council say she has come to hear what shall be done to her.

The king asks the advice of his council,

who dare not give it.

Ulfyn tells them they seem to hold the king for a fool.

They ask the king to make Ulfyn one of them.

The king is glad, and tells Ulfyn to go and counsel them for the best.

Ulfyn answers the king,

and goes to counsel the barons.

<sup>1</sup> The words "of the lady" are repeated.

Hesays, "Let us go to the lady and her friends."

They come before the lady,

and ask whether she and her friends will assent to what they ordain. Her friends take counsel.

They agree.

\*[Fol. 28a.]

The barons go together to consider their advice. They ask Ulfyn, who gives his advice.

He says the lady is left charged with a child.

It is right that the king restore the duke's lands. The king is without a wife,

therefore he should take the lady to wife,

and marry the duke's eldest daughter to king Loth.

the lady and hir frendes, and wete yef they will holde the same." And thei ansuerde that he had wele seide and wisely. And so they yede to the lady and hir frendes, to knowe theire will. And whan thei were come be-fore hir, of her wordes this was the somme. Thei seiden how the kynge hadde a-greed hym-self all to theire ordenaunce; "and thei we come for to knowe, yef she and hir frendes wolde assente to the ende and a-mendes that they wolde ordeyne in the same wise as did the kynge." And her frendes seide of this thei wolde take counseile. And she toke hir counseile to-geder what was beste to do ther-inne. And thei seide the kynge myght no more profer than to put hym-self in the ordenaunce of his barons. To this thei acorded, bothe the kynge and the lady and her frendes, and the parentes<sup>1</sup> of the Duke, and maden gode suertee, bothe on that oon \*part and the tother. And than the barons wente to-geder, and asked oon of a-nother what was beste rede in this mater. And whan euery man hadde seide his advise, thei asked Vlfyn what was his rede in that cas. And Vlfyn seide, "I shall sey myn avise, and that I say I will sey in all places. Ye knowe well," quod Vlfyn, "that the Duke was deed by the kynge and by his force, and that he hadde not forfet for to dye. And, wite ye wele, the lady is lefte charged with childe; and ye knowe well the kynge hath hir londe wasted and distroyed. And ye knowe wele also that she is oon of the beste ladies of the worlde, and oon of the wisest; and ye knowe also that the parentes of the Duke haue grete losse by thys deth, and therefore it is right that the kynge restore hem agein her londes, after that thei ben; and that he haue here hertes and hir love. And on the tother part, ye knowe that the kinge is withoute wif; and I sey as be myn avise, the kynge ne may a-mende this damage, but yef he take hir to his wif; and this me semeth he ought wele to do for hir and for oure love, and for them of the reeme that of this a-mendes shull heren. And whan he hath all thus do, and graunted that, than he first of all mary the Dukes eldest daughter to kynge loth of Orcanye, whiche is here

<sup>1</sup> This word is "parentee" in the MS.



presente, and to his other frendens, that he do so, that they holde hym here gode lorde and trewe kynge."

"Now haue ye herde," quod Vlfyn, "my counseile; now may ye sey what ye semeth yef this be not to yow a-greable." And thei ansuerde alle with oon assent, and seide, "Thow hast seide the beste counseile of the worlde, and the hiest that euer man durste thynke. And yef ye dur sey so to the kynge as ye haue seide here, and that we may se he therto a-corde, and we shull yow helpe ther-to right gladly." And Vlfyn ansuerde, "Ye ne sey not i-nough, but yef ye will ther-to a-corde playnly, I shall reherse the wordes to the kynges presence. And lo, here the kynge of Orcanye, on whom I sey grete parti of the pees, and therefore lete vs here hys auise." And the kynge loth seide, "For ought that ye haue seide touchinge me, I will not that the pees be left." And whan thise othir herde this, thei a-corden to this counseile alle, and com to the kynges teinte. And the lady was sente fore, and alle that weren of hir counseile. And whan thei were alle assembled, thei sat alle, saf Vlfyn; he was stondinge, and rehersed the a-corde of the pees as it was be-fore spoken. And than he seide to the barons, "Be ye not alle thus a-corded?" And they seiden alle, "Yesse." Than he turned to the kynge, and seide, "Sir, how sey ye to this thinge; will ye ther-to agreen to the acorde and ordenaunce of these worthy lordes?" And the kynge seide, "Ye, yef the duchesse and her frendes be contente, and that the kynge loth will for me take the Dukes doughter." And than ansuerde the kynge loth, "Sir, ther is nothinge that ye me requyre for youre love or youre profite but I will it gladly performe." Than spake Vlfyn to hym that hadde the wordes for the duchesse, a-lowde, that alle it myght heren, and seide, "Assente ye to this pees and acorde?" And ansuerde full wisely and pitously, be-holdinge his lady and her counseile, of whom the tounages of hir hertes were at hir yen, so that thei gonne wepe for ioye and pite; and he also that ansuerde to Vlfyn dide wepe, and seide that so high and wurschipful a-mendes \*dide neuer a lorde to his man. And than the lady and hir counseile toke theire avisement, and thei

Ulfyn asks what they think of his counsel.

They agree it is the best in the world.

Ulfyn says that if they agree to it he will go and tell the king. He appeals to the king of Orcayne, who agrees to his part.

They come to the king's tent, and the lady and her council are sent for.

Ulfyn rehearses what he had before spoken,

and asks the king if he agrees to the ordinance of these worthy lords.

The king answers "Yes," if the duchess and king Loth are content.

King Loth answers.

Ulfyn asks the duchess's spokesman if he assents to this peace.

The lady's council weep for joy, and he who answers, says that such

"amends did never a lord to his man." The lady and her council assent thankfully.

Uter-pendragon takes Ygerne to wife, and marries her daughter to king Loth.

The children of king Loth and his wife, the daughter of Ygerne.

Morgenis learns Astronomy,

and is cleped Morgne-le-fee.

Onenight the king asks Ygerne by whom she was so great.

She has great dread, and says weeping, "I may make to yow no lesynge."

The king says he will not depart from her for anything she may say.

She tells him that a man lay with her in semblance of the duke,

seiden, "Ther is no man in the worlde but he ought her-to assenten; wherfore we rede in-as-moche as we se that the kynge is so gracious a man and so trewe, that after alle these wordes we submytte vs holy to his ordenaunce." And thus was the pees graunted on that o[on] side and the tother. And so Vterpendragon toke Ygerne to his wif, and married her doughter to kynge loth of Orcanye. The weddyng of the kynge and Ygerne was the xx<sup>th</sup> day after that he hadde by hir leyn in hir chamber. And of her doughter that was married to kynge loth com Gawein, Agrauiayn, Gaheret, and gaheries, and mordred. And the kynge uentres of Garlot hadde a-nother of hir doughters, that was geten on baste, whos name was Morgeins. And be the counseile of alle hir frendes the kynge sette hir to skole in an house of religion, and she lerned so moche of an arte that is cleped astronomye, wherin she wrought many tymes; and by that crafte was she cleped morgne-le-fee. The other doughters alle the kynge dide marye, and moche he dide for the Dukes kyn and frendes.

Thus was the kynge wedded to Ygerne, and kepe her till her gretnesse apered. And as the kynge on a nyght lay with her, he asked with whom she was so grete, and þat she myght not be so grete with hym, seth the tyme thei were wedded, ffor he hadde neuer tyme with her leyn but that the tyme was wreten; ne she ne myght be grete by the Duke, for longe tyme be-fore his deth she hadde not hym seyn. Thus the kynge oposed Ygerne, and she hadde grete drede, and seide wepinge, "Sir, of this that ye sey I may make to yow no lesynge, ne of other thinges shall I not lyen; ffor oure lordes love, haue mercy on me, and I shall telle yow a merveile that is very soth, yef ye will me assure, yef it plesse yow, that ye shall not me forsaken." Quod the kynge, "Seith on hardely, for I will not departe fro yow in no wise for nothinge that ye sey." And than was the quene glad, and seide, "Sir, I shall telle yow a wonder thinge." And she tolde hym how a man hadde leyn with hir in semblaunce of the Duke, and brought with hym two men in semblaunce of two that the Duke loved beste of all the worlde. And thus com he to my chambir, seinge alle my peple, and lay with me. And

I wende verily it hadde be my lorde ; and he be-gate the childe that I am now with so grete. And I knowe wele it was that same nyght that my lorde were slain, for he lay with me whan tydinges com of my lordes deth. And than made he me to vndirstonde that he was my lorde, and that his peple ne wisten not that he was come to me. And so he departed, when he hadde herde these tidinges, and seide to me, ‘Feire wif, loke than noon this knowe, as moche as ye may kepe this secret, for so sholde ye be shamed yef it were knowen.’” “And I will that ye it knowe that this childe that shalbe born of yow, nys nother youre ne myn by reson; wherfore I pray yow that whan it is born, ye yevith ther as I shall comaunde to be yoven, that neuer we here ther-of speke.” And she ansuerde, “Sir, of me and all that to me aperteneth, may ye do youre volunte.” Than com the kynge \*to<sup>1</sup> Vlfyn, and tolde these wordes of hym and the quene.

When Vlfyn vndirstode, he ansuerde the kynge, “Now may ye knowe that my lady is both gode a[nd] trewe, and also wise, that so grete a thinge durste yow counsell. And ye haue also wele spedde the entente of Merlin, that in other maner ne myght haue the childe, that she is with grete.” Thus they endured to the vj monethes ende, that Merlyn hadde sette to speke with Vlfyn previly, and hym asked tydinges of that he wolde; and when thei hadde spoke to-gedir, he sente after the kynge be Vlfyn. And whan they were alle thre assembled, the kynge tolde Merlin how he hadde do with the quene, and how he hadde made the pees for to haue the childe. And Merlin seide, “Vlfyn is som-what a-quytte of the synne that he hadde in the love makinge, but I am not yet a-quyt of that; I helped to disseyve the lady ne of the childe that she hath with-inne hir, of whom she wote not who is the fader.” And the kynge seide, “Ye be so gode and so wise that ye can yow wele in this a-quyten.” And Merlin seide, “Ther-to moste ye helpe.” And the kynge seide he wolde hym helpe in all the maner that he can, and the childe wolde he make hym to haue. And Merlin

and he begat the child she is great with, on the night that her lord died.

The mantells her not to let any one know of his visit or she would be shamed.

The king prays the queen to give the child, when it is born, as he shall command. She promises to do his will.

\*[Fol. 29a.]

When Ulfyn hears of the conversation he tells the king that it shows the queen to be both good and true.

Merlin speaks to Ulfyn privily, and sends after the king, who tells him what he has said to the queen.

Merlin says that Ulfyn is somewhat acquit of his sin, but “I am not yet aquyt.”

The king says he is so good and wise that he is well acquitted.

<sup>1</sup> The word “to” is repeated.

Merlin tells  
of a good  
man and his  
wife,

who have a  
male child.

Merlin tells  
the king to  
send for the  
man, and  
make him  
and his wife  
to swear to  
keep a child  
that shall be  
brought to  
them.

Merlin takes  
his leave and  
goes to Blase.  
The king  
sends after  
the noble  
knight,  
whom he  
treats with  
great cheer,

and prays  
that he will  
help him.

The knight  
promises to  
do all in his  
power.

The king says  
that a man  
told him in  
his sleep that  
the knight  
was one of  
the worthiest  
men in his  
realm.  
He prays him  
to put away  
his own child  
and take one  
that shall be  
brought to  
him.

\*[Fol. 29b.]

The good  
man says,  
"This is a  
great thing  
that ye me  
require,"  
and asks  
when the  
child shall  
be born.

seide, "Ther is in this contre a gode man, that is oon of the trewest of all thi reame; and he hath a wif that is a gode woman and a wise, and the trewest of this londe and beste tacched of alle gode condiciouns; and she is now leide down in hir bedde of a childe male, and hir lorde is not moste riche man; therfore I wolde that ye sende for hym, and yeve so of youre goode, that he and the gode lady his wif swere on a boke to kepe a childe that shalbe brought vnto them, and that she yeve it soke of hir owne mylke, and hir owne childe to be put to a-nothir woman to be norissshed, and that they norisshe and kepe that childe that shalbe brought vnto hem." And the kynge seide, "Euen as thow haste seide, so shall I do." And Merlin toke his leve, and wente to Blase. And Vterpendragon sente after this noble knight; and whan he was come, the kynge made hym gret chere; and merveiled why the kynge made hym soche grete feeste. And the kynge seide, "Dere frende, I most discure to yow a merveile that is me be-fallen, and ye be my lege man, and therefore I pray yow for the feith that ye owen vnto me, that ye me helpe, after that I haue seide yow my counseile, and that ye kepe it secrete to youre power." And he ansuerde, "Syr, ther is nothinge that y[e] sey to me, or comaunde me to do, but that I shall do it with all my power; and yef it be a thyng that I may not do, I shall it wele counseile." And the kynge seide, "Ther is be-falle to me a wondir thyng in my slepe: of a man that come be-fore me, and seide ye be the worthiest man of all my reame, and moste trewe to me; and also he seide that ye hadde engendered on youre wif a childe that is born; and he badde me that I sholde pray yow to put youre owne childe to sowken a-nother woman, for my love, and youre wif to yeve the childe sowken of her owne mylke that \*shall be brought vn-to hir, and it kepe and norissshen."

Whan the gode man herde this ansuere, "Sir, this is a grete thyng that ye me requyre: that I sholde my childe disseuer from his nature, and make hym to be norissshed of a-nothir woman; and, sir, I pray yow, when shall this childe be born, and to me be brought?" And the kynge seyde, "So god

me helpe, I wote neuer." And than seide the knyght, "Sir, ther<sup>1</sup> is nothyng in this worlde that ye me comaunde but I shall it don." Than the kyng yaf hym so grete yestes that he was all astoned ther-of, and com home to his wif, and tolde her as the kyng hadde seide. And whan she it herde, she thought it a straunge thinge, and seide, "Sir, how may I that do, for to leve my sone for another mannes?" And the gode man seide, "Ther is nothyng but that we moste it do for hym that is oure souerein lorde; and he hath yoven vs so moche, and promysed, that we moste nede don hys plesir and his volunte, and I will verily that ye it graunten." And she answerde, "I am yowre and the childe youre, therefore do with me and with hym youre will; and I it graunten wele, for I ought in no wise to do agein your volunte." Than he bad hir ordeyne a-nother woman to norissh hir sone, for he dide but a-waite after the hour that the tother sholde be brought; and thus disseuerid the gode man his sone fro his wif. And the kyng sawgh that the quene was redy to ly down. And the day be-fore com Merlin to court secretly, and seide to Vlfyn, "I am wele plesed with the kyng, for he hath wele do as I seide to hym. Now go, bid hym go to the quene, and bid hym telle her that shall haue chylde to-morow at nyght, after mydnyght, and comaunde her that she do the childe to be delyuered to the firste man that shall mete at issue of the halle." And whan Vlfyn herde that, he seide, "Shull ye not speke with the kyng?" And Merlin seide, "No." Than com Vlfyn to the kyng, and seide as Merlin hadde comaunded. Whan the kyng herde that, he made grete ioye, and seide, "Shall I not speke with Merlyn er he go?" And Vlfyn seide, "Nay; but do as he hath sente yow worde." Than yede the kyng to the quene, and seide, "I shall telle yow a thyng that ye shall fynde trewe, and doth as I shall comaunde yow." And she seide, "Sir, I will do as ye comaunde." And the kyng seide, "To-morow, after mydnyght, with the grace of god, ye shull be deliuered of the childe in youre

He agrees to do it. The king gives him great gifts. The good man goes home to his wife, who asks how she is to leave her own son for another man's. Her husband says they must do it for their sovereign king. The wife agrees to do as her husband wishes.

She gets another woman to nourish her son.

Merlin comes to court secretly, and tells Vlfyn he is pleased with the king.

He bids him go to the queen and tell her that she will have a child to-morrow, and command her to give it to the first man that is seen in the hall.

Vlfyn tells the king that he has seen Merlin.

The king goes to the queen, and tells her that to-morrow, at midnight, she will be delivered of a child.

<sup>1</sup> The word "ther" is repeated twice.

She is to give it to one of her most secret women, and bid her deliver it to the first man she finds in the hall.

The queen promises to do as he commands.

After midnight she is delivered.

She gives the child to a woman she most trusted.

\*[Fol. 30a.]

The woman bears it to the hall door,

where she finds a right old man,

who takes the child and then disappears.

The woman returns to her lady.

The queen weeps.

wombe; and I pray yow and require that as soone as it is born that ye take it to oon of youre moste secrete woman, and bid hir deliuer it to the firste man þat she fyndeth at the issue of the halle; and that ye sey to hem that be at the birthe of the childe that they speke neuer worde ther-of, ne discure that ye hadde childe, for moche peple shull sey than that it were neuer myn, ne me semeth not it sholde be." And the lady ansuerde, "Sir, that I haue tolde yow is trewe;" and seide, "I knowe not who it be-gat; and I shall do that ye comaunde as she that hath grete shame of hir mysauenture. But of this haue I grete merveile: that ye knowe so wele my delyueraunce; and I pray yow that ye do as I yow say;" and seide, "So shall I do so god be myn helpe." Thus departed the counseile of the kynge and the quene. And she a-bode as longe as god wolde. And the morowe after eve-songe toke hir grete disese of trauelinge, vnto the hour that the kynge hadde hir seide, and a-noon after mydnyght she was delyuerid. And than a-noon she cleped a woman that she moste trusted, and seide, "Take this childe, and bere it to the halle dore, and yef ye fynde ther a man that it aske, deliue<sup>re</sup> it to hym, and take gode hede what man he be." This \*woman dide as the quene comaunded; toke the childe, and folded it in the beste clothes that she hadde, and bar it to the halle dore; and whan she come ther, she fonde a man that semed right olde and rympled. And she seyde, "What a-bidest thow after?" And he seide, "For that that thow bringeste." And she seide, "What man art thow; to whom shall I telle my lady that I haue yoven her childe?" Quod he, "Ther-of hast thow nought to done, but do as thow art comaunded;" and toke hym the childe. And a-noon as he it hadde, she wiste not where he was be-comen, and com ayen to the lady, and seide she hadde yove the childe to right an olde man; but I wote not what he is elles, for as sone as<sup>1</sup> I hadde it hym delyuered he was vanysshid in soche maner that I knewe not where he be-cam." The quene dide wepe, as she that hadde grete doel, and he that hadde this childe

<sup>1</sup> The words "soone as" are repeated.

yede as faste as he myght to Antor, and fonde hym erly, as he was goinge to masse. And he hadde take the semblaunce of a moche olde man, and called to hym, and seide, "Anrtor! I wolde speke with the." "And I with yow," quod he gladly. The olde man seide, "I haue brought the a childe, and I pray the that thou do it norisshe as richely as thou wolde do thyn owne. And, wite thou wele, yef thou do thus, grete gode shall come to the and thyn heyres; and yef a man tolde it the, thou woldest it not be-leve." And Antor ansuerde, "This is the childe that the kyng me praide to norisshe of my wif, and to put a-wey myn for hym." And he seide, "It is the same saunz-faile; and the kyng and all worthi men and worthi women oughten the to preyen, and I my-self the preye; and, wite it well, that my prayer is as moche worth as a riche mannes." Antor toke the childe, and saugh it was right faire, and asked yef it were cristned, and he saide, "Nay; but now a-noon do it baptise in this chirche." And Antor toke it gladly, and asked of hym "What shall be his name?" And he seide, "My rede is that thou clepe it Arthur, and thou shalt fynde that it shall falle to the grete welthe, er thou haue it kept longe while. And thou ne thy wif shall not wite whethir thou shalt love better of thi childe or hit."

**A**ntor seide, "Who shall I sey hath take me this childe, and what man ye be?" And he seide, "Ye shall not knowe at this tyme no more of me." And thus thei departed, and Antor made the childe to be baptised, and cleped hym Arthur, and bar hym to his wif, and seide, "Lo, here the childe that I haue yow so moche I-praide fore." And she seide, "It is welcome." And she toke it, and asked yef it were baptised. And he seide, "Ye, and his name is Arthur." Than the lady yaf it sowke, and it norissed, and put her sone to a-nothir woman. And Vterpendragon hilde after the londe longe tyme; and so he fill in a grete sekenesse of the gowte in handes and feet. And thanne a-ros the Danes in many places of the londe a-gein hym, and dide grete outrage; so that he sente for his barons, and asked theire counseile. And the barons reddeden to be avenged vpon hem, yef he

Theman who had the child goes to Antor,

and says, "I have brought theechilde."

Antor answers, "This is the child that the king prayed me to nourish of my wife."

He takes the child, and seeing it is right fair, he asks if it is christened.

The child is to be called Arthur.

Antor asks who the man is.

He answers that he shall not know now.

Antor bears the child to his wife.

Uter-pendragon has the gout in his hands and feet.

The Danes arise in many places.

The king prays his barons to assemble a power to meet the enemy.

The king's men are discomfited.

[\*Pol. 306.]

Merlin comes to the king,

who makes him right fair cheer.

Merlin tells him his people will not succeed in battle without a good lord,

and that he should be borne in a litter to fight his enemies,

and then divide his treasure, as he will not live long.

myght. Than seide Vterpendragon, "I pray yow assemble yow a power as worthi men owe for theire lorde." And thei seide thei wolde so with gode will. And so they yede, and met with their enmyes, and saugh that thei hadde drawe to hem grete part of the londe. And the kynges men were with-uten a lorde assembled, and were discourfited; and so loste the kyng grete part of his men. Whan the kyng herde tydinges that his men were discourfited, he was full wroth. Than come the remenaunte from the bataile. \*And whan the tother party hadde discourfited this bataile, thei encresed moche of peple, and wexed right stronge. And Merlin, that alle these thinges knewe, com to Vterpendragon, that for his maladie was right feble. And whan he wiste that Merlyn was come, he was gladde, and thought in his herte that now he sholde haue counfort. Whan Merlin come be-fore Vterpendragon, he made hym right feire chere. And Merlin seide, "Ye be right seke, and gretly ye be afraide." And Vterpendragon seide, "I haue right, for my men, and that ye knowe wele, and that I wende to haue no drede of, haue distroyde my reame, and slayn my men in bataile." And Merlin seide, "Now maist thou se that peple ne a-vaile not in bataile with-oute a gode lorde." And the kyng seide, "For godes love, Merlin, counseile me what I shall do." And Merlin seide, "I will telle the a thyng in previte, that I will tho byleve: make somowne all thyng oste an thy peple; and whan thei be alle come, do the to be bore in a lytier, and so go fight with thyng enmyes; and, wite it verily, thou shalt hem venquise. And whan thou hast hem venquysed, thou shalt knowe well what a londe is worth that is with-uten a kyng. And whan thou hast thus don, departe for god, and for thy soule all thy tresour, for thou maiste not longe ther-after lyven. And I will wele that thou knowe that thei that haue this grete auers, and diden er it be departed, that the merite of the godes be not theires; but it is theirs that will not suffre hem to do nought for their owne soules, and tho be develes. And, wite wele, it were better to the richeman that he hadde neuer nought I-hadde, but he departe in his lif tyme. The richesse and the honoures



of the worlde doth but annoye to the soule; but yef it be spent and departed as it oweth to be, and thow that knowest thow moste make an ende, thow oweste to departe hem in soche maner that thow lese not the lif *perdurable*, ne the ioye of the tother worlde; for this is but vanyte, and that shall I shewe in oo[n] worde; noon hath here so grete ioye erthly to whom it ne faileth, and that oon beyeth in the othir worlde may neuer faile ne a-peire; and what oon suffred in this worlde, oure lorde doth it to prove hym for the tother. Therefore, yef thow be wise of that god hath the yoven in this mortall lif, that thow ther-with purchase the lif euerlastynge. And thow that haste had so grete goodes in this worlde, what hast thow do for oure lorde that alle these graces hath the yoven? I haue the moche loved, and I love the, and knewe wele that noon may so wele love as thi-self; and as I haue the seide, thow maist not longe lyve after this victorie. And alle the gode dedis a man doth by his lyve is litill a-vaile but yef he haue gode ende; and yef thow haddest do alle the gode dedes of the worlde, and thyn ende were euell, thow were in a venture all for to lese; and yef thow hadde don all the wikkednesse of the worlde, and thow haddest gode ende, thow sholdest haue pardon. And I do the to wite thow shalt nought haue with the oute of this worlde, but thy gode dedes. Now do that thow hast to do; and thow knowest wele that thy wif Ygerne is deed, and that thow maist no mo haue; and thy \*londe be left after the with-uten heire; and therfore enforce the to do well, for thyn owen soule. Ffare-well now, for I haue no more with the to do; but bid Vlfyn to yeve credence to me whan myster is, and than he helpe me to bere trewe witnessse whan nede is, and recorde the trowthe." And Vterpendragon seide, "This is a ferly thinge that thow hast seide, I sholde venquyse myn enmyes in a litere; how may I that yelde to oure lorde?" And Merlin seide. "By thi gode ende. And now I go; I pray the, after the bataile, haue mynde of that I haue the seide." And Vterpendragon asked tidinges of the childe that he bar a-vey. And Merlin seide, "Of that ne recche the nothinge for to enquire; but this I will that thow wite, that the childe

The riches and honours of this world but annoy the soul.

Merlin tells the king that he will not live long after the victory,

\*[Fol. 31a.]

and urges him to do well for his soul's sake.

Uter-pendragon says it is a strange thing that he should vanquish his enemies in a litter.

He asks after the child.

Merlin tells him it is fair and well grown.

is feire and well growen, and well taught and norissed." And the kyng asked, "Shall I se yow euer eny more after this?" And Merlyn seyde, "Ye, ones, and neuer no more."

The king summons his host.

Thus departed the kyng and Merlin. And the kyng somowned his oste, and seide he wolde go with hem on his enmyes. Than he was ledde in a letere; and the sarazins com and fought with hym. And the kynges men, be the counseile of her lorde, discourfited their enmyes, and slown grete plente; that hadde the kyng the victorye of the bataile, and venquysed his enmyes. And so the londe was set in pees; and than he be-thought hym of that Merlin hadde hym seide, and repeed to london, and sente for his grete tresour, and yaf his godes to gode men and gode women, and to mysese peple of his reame, and dide many faire almesse dedes; and the remenaunt he dide departe be the advise of his mynistres to holy cherche. Thus departed the kyng his tresoure, that nought be lefte to hym-self wher-of he cowde remembre, that he ne yaf all for the love of god by the counseile of Merlyn.

The king's men discourfite their enemies.

The king repairs to London,

and does many "faire almesse dedes."

He leaves nought of his treasure for himself.

Full meke was the kyng a-gein god and the peple, and a-gein the mynistres of holy cherche, that alle thei hadde grete pite. Thus was he kepte longe tyme seke; and his peple were assembled at london, that grete doute hadde of his deth. And thei knewe wele that dye he moste, for he wax so feble that he myght not speke in thre dayes. Than com Merlin in to the town, that all this wiste wele. And whan he was come, the worthi men maden hym to come be-fore them, and seiden, "Merlyn, now is the kyng deed that ye loved so wele." And Merlin seide, "Ye sey not wele; noon shall dye that maketh so gode ende as he doth; ne he is not yet deed." And thei seide, "That he is, for this thre dayes he spake no speche, ne neuer shall speke worde." And Merlin seide, "Yef god will he shall speke; now, come, and ye shall heir hym speke." And they seide that than he dide grete merveile. Than thei rede ther as the kyng lay, and opened alle the wyndowes; and than thei seide, "Sir, lo here Merlin." And the kyng turned toward hym to his power, and made semblaunce that he knewe hym. And Merlyn seide to

He is long sick.

The worthy men come to Merlin to tell him of the death of the king.

Merlin says he is not dead.

They tell the king that Merlin is here.

the barons, prelates that ther weren, "Now heir the laste worde that the kyng shall speke." And than thei drough nere, and seide, "Trowest thou to make hym speke?" And Merlin seide, "Ye shall se."

Than Merlyn turned hym on the tother side of the paillet, and rowned in the kynges ere, and seide, "Thow haste made a faire ende, yef thi conseyence be soche as the semblaunce; and I telle the thi sone Arthur shall be kyng nexte of thy reame after the, be the vertu of \*Ihesu criste, and shall a-complisshe the rounde table that thou haste be-gonne." Whan the kyng herde that, he drough towarde hym, and seide, "For godes love, pray hym to pray oure lorde Ihesu criste for me." And Merlin seide to hem that ther were, "Now haue ye herde the last worde that the kyng hath spoke to me; and ye wende that he shulde neuer haue spoken," And than wente Merlin, and alle the other that hadden grete merveile of Merlin that he hadde made hym to speken, ne ther was noon that wiste what the kyng hadde seide, saf Merlin. Thus ended the kyng, and the princes, and the barons, and bisshopes and archebisshopes dide hym the grettest honour and the feirest servise that thei myght. Thus lefte the londe with-uten heyre. The morowe after the kyng was biried assembled the barons and the prelates of the cherche, and toke counseile how the reame sholde be gouerned, and neuer myght the counseile a-corde to noon. Than seide thei, be comen assent, thei wolde counseile with Merlyn, that hadde grete wisdom, and seide thei herde hym neuer but geve trewe counseile, and gode to euery man. Thus thei acorded, and sente to seche after Merlyn.

Merlin whispers to the king that his son Arthur shall be the next king, and accomplish the round table. \**[Fol. 316.]*

The king says his last word.

The princes, bishops, and barons do the king the greatest honour.

After his burial they assemble to consider who shall govern the realm.

They send to seek Merlin.

## CHAPTER VI.

### ARTHUR MADE KING.

Whan he was come be-fore hem, they seide, "Merlyn, we knowe well thou art wise, and haste alwey loved wele the kynges of this reame, and thou knowest wele that this londe is lefte with-uten heir; and a londe with-oute a lorde a-vailleth

They pray him to help them to find a king.

Merlin says  
he is not fit  
to give such  
counsel,

but advises  
them to wait  
till Yule,

and pray to  
our lord for  
a rightful  
governor.

\*[Fol. 32a.]

They agree to  
his counsel.

The bishops  
and arch-  
bishops to  
command  
prayer in all  
the churches.

The barons  
pray Merlin  
to be with  
them at  
Christmas.

litill. Therefore we pray the and requere to helpe vs to these soche a man as myght the reame gouerne, to the profite of the peple and sauacion of holy cherche." And Merlin seide, "I am no soche man that owe to entermete of soche counseile, ne that I sholde chese a man to be a gouernoure; but yef ye acorde to myn a-warde, I shall telle yow, and yef I sey not wele, a-corded not ther-to." And thei seide, "Alle to the welfare and profite of vs alle oure lorde sende grace!" And Merlin seide, "I haue moche loved this reame and the peple ther-inne, and yef I wolde telle yow whom ye sholde make youre kynge, I ought wele to be beleved, and it were right; but oon faire a-uenture is yow befallen, yef ye will it knowen. The kynge is now deed sithe Martin-masse, and fro hens to youle is but litill space; and yef ye leve my counseile, I shall yewe yow gode and trewe, bothe ageyn god and the worlde." And thei seiden all at ones, "Sey what thow wylte, and we shall it holden." And he seide, "Ye knowe wele that now cometh the feste that oure lorde was Inne I-bore, and he is lorde of alle lordes; and I will vndirtake, yef ye and alle the peple comynally pray to oure lorde for his grete pite, for to sende yow a rightfull gouernoür, as he, th[rou]gh his grete humylite at this feste, cleped youle, liste to be born of a virgyn, and kynge of alle kynges; that he at this feste chese yow soche a man to be youre kynge and lorde, that the peple may rule and gouerne to his plesir; and that he shew soche demonstraunce that the peple may se and knowe that it is be his eleccion, and that he that so is chosen be kynge with-oute eny other eleccion; \*and, wite ye well, yef ye thus do, ye shall se the eleccion of our lorde Ihesu criste." Than they ansuerde alle with oon assent, and seide, "We acorde with this counseile, and ther is noon erthly man but that he ought ther-to acorde." Than thei praide alle, bisshopis and archebisshopes, to comaunde thourgh alle the cherche, that the peple to praye as ye haue herde. And all the lordes were sworne oon to a-nother to holde the awarde of holy cherche, in that god wolde hem shewen. In this maner be thei accorded to the counseile of Merlin. And Merlyn toke leve of hem, and thei hym praide to be with hem at Cristemas, to se yef it were

soth or no that he hadde hem taught. And Merlyn seide, "I shall not be ther, for ye shull not se me till the eleccion be made." Thus wente Merlin to blase, and tolde hym alle these thinges. Than alle the worthy men of the reame of logres, thei come vnto logres at the yole. Thus was this thinge don and a-biden to the yole. And Antor, that hadde this childe norissed till he was a moche man of xv yere of age, he hadde hym trewly norissed, so that he was faire and moche, and he hadde neuer soken other mylke but of his wif, and his sone he hadde made to be norysshed of a-nother woman, ne Antor wiste not whether he loved better, ne he cleped hym never but his sone, and he wende verily that he hadde ben his fader. At halowmasse Antor made hys sone knyght, and at yoole he come to logres, as did the other knyghtes of the londe, and brought with hym his two sones.

He goes to  
Blase.

Arthur is  
nourished  
till his 15th  
year by An-  
tor,

whom he  
supposes to  
be his father.

On yoole even was assembled alle the clergie of the reame, and alle the barouns that weren of valoure and wele hadde don as Merlin hadde seide; and whan they were alle come, thei ledde alle symple lif and honeste. Thus thei abode alle the yoole even, and weren at messe at mydnyght, and made mekely theire orisouns to oure lorde, that he of his grace sende hem soche a man that myght profitably meyntene hem and the cristen feith. Thus they a-bode the messe of the day, and so ther were many that seide thei were foles that trowed oure lorde wolde put his entente to chesinge of her kynge. And as thei were in this talkynge, thei rounge to messe of the day, and so thei yede to serv[i]se. Whan thei were alle assembled, ther was oon of the holiest men of the londe araied to singe the messe; but er he yede to messe, he spake to the peple and seide, "Ye be assembled for thre thinges for youre profite, and I shall say yow whiche thei be: Ffirst of all, for the sauacion of youre soules and for the wurship of god, and the myracle and high vertu that he thys day shall shewe a-monges vs yef it be his plesire to yeve vs a kynge and chiefteyn that may saue and mayntene holy cherche, that is the sustenance of alle trewe cristen peple, we be come to chese oon of vs, we be not so wise

At Yule all  
the clergy  
and barons  
assemble.

They make  
their orisons  
to our Lord.

Many say  
they are fools  
to think our  
Lord would  
choose them  
a king.

One of the  
holiest men  
of the land  
addresses the  
people, tell-  
ing them why  
they are as-  
sembled to-  
gether.

They do as  
the good man  
counsels  
them.

\*[Fol. 32b.]

When the  
people come  
out of church  
they see a  
large stone,

in the middle  
of which is  
an anvil of  
iron, and a  
sword.

They go into  
the church  
again and tell  
the arch-  
bishop, who  
casts holy  
water upon  
the anvil.

It is written  
on the sword  
in letters of  
gold that he  
who takes it  
shall be king.

The stone is  
delivered to  
ten worthy  
men.

The good  
man tells the  
people that  
some of them  
must be good  
men, as our  
Lord hath  
shewn this  
great mira-  
cle.

to knowe who is moste profitable of alle this peple; and for that we ne knowe, we owe to praye to the kyng of kynges, that is Ihesu criste oure saueoure, that he shewe vs verry tokenynge to his pleasaunce as he was bore on this day, so euery man praye in the beste wise he can." And thus they did as the gode men hem counseiled; and \*he yede forth to messe and he com to the gospell, and that thei hadden offred. Some of the peple yede oute of the cherche where ther was a voyde place; and whan they com oute of the cherche thei sawgh it gan dawe and clere, and saugh be-fore the cherche dore a grete ston foure square, and ne knewe of what ston it was; but some seide it was marble. And a-boue, in the myddill place of this ston, ther stode a styth of Iren that was largely half a fote of height, and thourgh this stithi was a swerde ficchid in to the ston.

When thei sye this that firste weren come oute of the chirche, thei hadde gret merueile, and yede a-gein in to the chirche, and tolde the archebisshop. And whan the gode man that sange masse herde this, he toke haly water, and caste vpon the stith. And the archebisshop lowted to the swerde, and sawgh letteres of golde in the stiel; and he redde the letteres, that seiden, "Who taketh this swerde out of this ston sholde be kyng by the eleccion of Ihesu criste." And when he hadde redde this letteres, he seide to the peple what it ment. Than was the ston deliuered to x worthi men to kepe, and to two clerkes. Than thei seiden that oure lorde hadde hem shewed feire myracle; and yeden a-gein in to the mynistris to heir oute the masse, and to yelde oure lorde graces. And thei soungen 'te deum laudamus.' And whan the gode man was come to the awter, he turned to the peple, and seide, "Feire lordes, now may ye se that some of yow be goode men, when thourgh youre prayers and orisouns oure lorde hath shewde this grete myracle; wherfore I praye and require yow a-boue alle vertues in this erthe, for highnesse ne erthly richesse that god hath yoven in this worlde, that noon be a-gein this eleccion that god hath vs shewde the demonstraunce, and the surpluis he shall vs shewen at his volunte."

Thanne the godeman sange forth the masse; and whan it was fynished, they assembled a-boute the ston, bothe oon and other who that myght take oute this swerde firste. And than thei seiden and a-corded alle that thei sholde assaien it, as the mynistres of holy cherche wolde assigne. To this ther was grete discorde amonge the higheste men and moste puyssaunt; and thei that hadde force seide they wolden asseyen firste; so ther were many wordes that ought not to be rehersed. The archebisshop spake that alle myght here, and seide, "Sirs, ye ne be not so wise, ne so wele a-vised men as I wende. And I will wele þat ye alle wite that oure lorde hath oon i-chosen, but I knowe not whom. And thus moche may I say to yow, that gentillesse ne richesse shall haue no power a-gein the wille of Ihesu criste, but truste so moche in hym, that yef he that is ther-to chosen were yet vn-bore, it shall neuer be taken oute of the ston till he come that it is ordeyned the honour." Than a-corded alle the noble men and wise, and seide that he hadde seide soth. And the wise men and the high barouns toke their counseile, and a-corded to stonde the ordenaunce of the archebisshop, and com a-gein, and seiden heringe alle the peple. And than made the bisshop grete ioye, and dide wepe for pite, and seide, "This humylite that is in youre hertes is of god; and I will that ye knowe after \*myn entente, shall be to the volunte of god and profite of cristen feith, so that I shall haue no blame yef god will." This parliament was be-fore high messe of the assay of the swerde, till that high messe was saide. Than seide the Archebisshop to the peple, and shewed hem the gret myracle that god hadde don for hem at this eleccion, "and whan oure lorde sette Iustice in erthe, he sette it in the styth and in the swerde; and the Iustice ouer the lay peple ought to be the swerde, ffor the swerde at the be-gynnyng was take to thre orderes to diffende holy cherche, and mayntene right witenesse. And oure lorde hath now made eleccion be the swerde; and, wite it wele, alle that this haue seen and be-holde to whom he will the Iustice yeve. And lete no man be to hasty for to assaye, for it shall neuer be drawn oute for richesse, ne for pride; ne the

When the mass was finished, the people assemble about the stone.

They quarrel who shall try the sword first.

The archbishop reproves them.

If he that is chosen is not yet born, it shall not be taken till he come.

The barons agree to the ordinance of the archbishop.

The bishop weeps.

\*[Fol. 33a.]

The archbishop expounds the miracle to the people

poure peple be not displede, though the lordes and the high astates assaye be-fore, ffor it is right and reson that the lordes assaien firste; for ther ne is noon of yow but he ought to haue his kynge and his lorde, the beste and moste worthy man that he kowthe knowe be his reson."

They agree that the archbishop shall choose those who shall try first.

He chooses 150 of the most worthy lords.

None can take out the sword.

They try for eight days.

The archbishop preaches to the barons.

The barons and knights go to a tourney in a fair plain.

Antor makes his eldest son a knight at halowtide before Yule. Kay sends Arthur for his sword.

Thus thei acorded to the archebissshop with gode herte, and with-uten euyll will, that he sholde chese hem that he wolde to assaye firste. Thus thei graunted alle to holde hym for hir kynge, to whom god wolde shewe his grace. Thanne the arche-bissshop chese oute C.l. of the hiest and moste worthi lordes, and made hem go to the assaie. And whan they hadde alle assayed, than he commaunded alle other to assaye. And than they assayden alle they, oon after a-nother, that assaye wolde; but ther was noon that myght it taken oute. And so it was com-aunded to be kept with x noble men; and thei were charged to take goode hede who com to assaien, and yef eny ther were that myght drawn out of the ston. Thus was the swerde assaied alle þe viij dayes, and alle the barouns were at high messe; and the archebissshop hem preched, and shewde as hym semed beste. And than he seide, "I tolde yow wele that all be leysers myght he come that was ferthest fro the assaye of this swerde; now may ye verily knowe that neuer noon, saf he that oure lorde will, ne shall it not oute take." And than thei seiden alle that thei wolde not out of the town, till thei westen to whom god wolde graunte that honoure. In that maner thei a-biden oute the messe, and after thei wente to their hosteles to mete, and after mete, as they were vsed that tyme, yede the barouns and the knyghtes to boorde in a feire pleyn, and the x men that were ordeyned to kepe this swerde, yede also to se this bourdisse. And when the knyghtes hadde turneyd a-while, thei toke their sheldes to their squeres, so that the peple of the town yede to arme them. And Antor hadde made his eldeste sone knyght at the halowtide be-fore yoole. And whan the medle was be-gonne, Kay called his brother Arthur, and seide, "Go faste to oure oste, and fecche my swerde." And Arthur was goode and seruisable, and seide, "With gode will;" and than smote the hors with the



spores, and rode forth to his ostell for to fecche his brothers swerde, or ellis some other, yef he \*myght eny fynde. And he fonde noon, ffor the hostesse hadde sette it in hir chambir. And so he turned to hem a-gein; and whan he saugh he myght noon fynde, he gan to wepe for grete anger. And as he come be-fore the mynster ther the ston was, he saugh the swerde whiche he hadde neuer assaide, and thought yef he myght it gete to bere it to his brother. And as he com ther-by on horse bakke, he hente the swerde be the hiltes and drough it oute, and couered it with his lappe. And his brother that a-bode after with-oute the towne saugh hym come, and rode a-gein hym, and asked his swerde. And Arthur seide he myght not haue it; "but I haue brought heere a-nother," and drough it oute from vndyr his cote, and toke it to his brother. And a-noon, as Kay saugh this swerde, he knewe it wele that it was the swerde of the ston, and thought he wolde be kyng, and seide he wolde seche his fader till he fonde hym, and than he seide, "Sir, I shall be kyng; lo, here is the swerde of the ston."

\*[Fol. 33b.]  
Arthur cannot find it.

He sees the sword in the stone,

and draws it out.

He tells his brother he has brought another sword for him.

Kay takes the sword to his father,

Whan the fader it saugh, he hadde merueille how he it gatt. And he seide he toke it oute of the ston. Whan Antor herde that, he leved it not, but seide he dide lye. Than thei yede to the mynster, ther the ston was, and the tother squyre after. Whan Antor sigh the ston, and the swerde not ther-ynne, he seide, "Feire sone, how hadde ye this swerde? Loke ye, do not lye; and thow do lye, I shall it know wele, and neuer shall I the love." And he ansuerde as he that was sore a-shamed, "I shall yow lye no lesynge, for my brother Arthur it me brought whan I hadde hym to go fecche myn, but I wote neuer how he it hadde." Whan Antor herde this, he seide, "Sone, yeve it me, for ye haue ther-to no ryght." And Kay it deliuered to his fader; and he loked be-hynde hym, and saugh Arthur, and cleped hym, and seide, "Come hider, faire sone, and take this swerde, and put it ther as ye it toke." And he toke the swerde, and put it in the stith, and it heilde as wele, or better, than it dide be-fore. And Antor comaunded his sone Kay to take it oute; and he assaied, but it wolde not be. Than

and tells him he took it out of the stone.

Antor tells him not to lie.

Kay says that Arthur brought it to him.

Arthur puts the sword in the anvil again.

Kay tries to take it out, but cannot.

Antor takes  
Arthur in his  
arms and  
tells him he  
shall beking.

Antor cleped hem bothe, and seide to Kay, "I wiste well that thou haddest not take the swerde oute." Thanne he toke Arthur in his armes, and seide, "Feire dere sone, yef I myght purchase that ye be kyng, what gode sholde I haue therfore?"

Arthur  
weeps be-  
cause Antor  
says he is not  
his father.

"Ffader," quod he, "I may nother haue that honour, ne noon other goode, but that ye be ther-of lorde, as my lorde and my fader." And he seide, "Sir, youre fader I am as in norture, but certes I dide yow neuer engender, ne I wot neuer who dide yow engender." Whan Arthur saugh that Antor hym denyed to ben

\*[Fol. 34a.]

Antor tells  
him how he  
nourished  
him and put  
away his own  
son.

hys fader, he wepte tendirly, and hadde grete doel, and seide, "Feire sir, how sholde I haue this dignite, or eny other, whan I haue failed to haue a fader." "A fader muste ye nede haue; but, feire dere sir, yef oure lorde will that ye haue this grace, and I helpe yow it to purchase, telle me what I shall be the better?" And Arthur seide, \* "Sir, so as ye will youre-self."

Arthur prays  
Antor not to  
deny that he  
is his father.

Thanne Antor tolde hym what bounte he hadde hym don, and how he hadde hym norissed, and how he put a-wey his sone Kay, and made hym to be norissed of a straunge woman; "wherefore ye owe to yeve my sone and me guerdon, ffor ther was neuer man more tenderly norissed than I haue yow. Wherefore I praye yow, yef god yeve yow this grace, and I may helpe yow ther-to, that ye guerdon me and my sone." And Arthur seide,

Antor begs  
him, if he is  
king, to make  
Kay his  
steward.

"I praye yow that ye denye not me to be my fader, for than I sholde not wite wheper that I sholde go; and yef ye may helpe to purchase this grace, and god will that I haue it, ye can no-thinge sey ne comaunde but I shall it do." And Antor seide, "I shall

Arthur says  
he will do it  
with good  
will.

not aske thi londe; but thus moche I will praye yow, that yef ye be kyng, that ye make my sone Kay youre stywarde in soche maner that for no forfet that he do to yow, ne to man of youre londe, that he lese not hys office; and yef he be fool, or fell, or vilenis, ye owe better to suffre hym than eny other; and therefore I praye yow to graunte hym that I yow demaunde." And Arthur seide he wolde it do with gode will. And than he ledde hym to the auter, and swore that he sholde this trewly performe. And whan he hadde sworne, he com be-fore the mynster; and the turment was ended, and the barouns com to hire evesonge.

Than Antor cleped alle his frendes, and com to the Archebissshop, and seide, "Sir, lo, here is a childe of myn that is no knyght, that prayeth me that I wolde helpe that he myght assay the auenture of the swerde, and that it plesse yow to clepe the barouns." And so he did; and thei assembled a-boute the ston. Than Antor bad Arthur take oute the swerde, and delyuere it to the Archebissshop. And Arthur toke the swerde be the hiltes, and with-oute more taryinge yaf it to the Archebissshop. And a-noon he toke Arthur in his armes, and seide "Te deum laudamus," and so brought hym in to the mynster. And the barouns and high men, that this hadde seyn and herde, were angry and sorowfull for this, and seiden it myght not be that soche a symple man of so lowe degre sholde be lorde of hem alle. Ther-with was the Archebissshop displeased, and seide, "Sirs, oure lorde knoweth beste what euery man is." And Antor and his frendes abode by Arthur, and alle the comen peple; and alle the barouns were a-geyn them and a-geyn Arthur. And thanne seide the archebissshop wordes of grete hardynesse, "I do yow to wite thaugh alle thei that ben in the worlde wolde be a-gein this eleccion, and oure lorde will that this man be kynge, he shall be it with-outen faile; and I shall shewe yow how, and what affiaunce I haue in oure lorde Ihesu criste. Now, feire brother Arthur, go, put the swerde a-geyn in the same place that ye toke it fro." And Arthur put the swerde a-geyn in the selue place, and it hilde as faste as by-fore. And than seide the Archebissshop, "So feire eleccion was neuer sene; now go ye, riche barouns and lordes, and assay yef ye may take oute the swerde." Than yede alle for to assaye, but noon it myght remeve fro the place that it was Inne. Than seide the archebissshop, "Grete folye do ye that be a-geyn oure lordes wille; for \*now ye se well how it is." And thei seide, "Sir, we ne be not a-gein oure lo[r]des wille; but it ys grevouse thinge to vs to haue a garcion to be lorde ouer vs alle." And the archebissshop seide, "He that hath hym chosyn knoweth beste what he is." Thanne the barouns praide the bissshop to lete the swerde be stille in the ston till Candelmesse; and by that tyme men of ferther contrees

Antor goes to the archbishop, and prays that his son may try the sword.

Arthur takes out the sword and delivers it to the archbishop, who takes him in his arms.

The barons are angry.

The archbishop is displeased with them,

and says that if our Lord wills this man to be king no one can prevent it.

Arthur puts the sword in again.

All the barons try to take it out, but none can do it.  
\*[Fol. 34b.]

They say they will not oppose our Lord's will.

They pray the bishop to let the sword remain in the stone till Candlemas.

Men come  
from every  
country to  
try it.

Arthur takes  
out the sword  
easily,  
The people  
weep for joy.

The barons  
pray that the  
sword may  
remain till  
Pasch.

Arthur puts  
the sword  
back.

The arch-  
bishop tells  
him to choose  
officers for  
his house-  
hold.

Arthur says  
he trusts in  
his counsel.

The arch-  
bishop and  
Antor choose  
councillors.  
Kay is made  
steward.

myght come to assaye the auenture. And the archebisshop hem graunted. Than come oute of euery contree, and asseyde who that wolde. And whan they haddenn assaied, the archebisshop seide, "Arthur, yef it be pleser to oure lorde Ihesu criste that thow be kynge, go forth and brynge that swerde." And Arthur yede to the swerde, and toke it oute as lyghtly as nothings hadde it holden. Whan the prelates and the comen peple saugh this, thei ganne to wepe for ioye and pite, and seiden, "Sirs, is ther yet eny man that seith a-gein this eleccion?" And the barouns seide, "Syr, we pray yow that the swerde<sup>1</sup> be suffred yet in the ston to Passh, but eny man come by that terme that may take it then; and ellis we will obbey to this; and yef ye will not suffre so longe tyme, euery man do the beste he may." And the archebisshop seide, "Yef so be he a-bide to Passh, and noon other come that may parforme this a-uenture, wele ye Than obbey yow to this eleccion?" And thei seide alle, "Ye." Thanne the archebisshop seide to Arthur, "Sette the swerde a-gein in the ston, for yef god will, thow shalt not faile of the dignite that he hath the promysed." And Arthur did as he comaunded; and ther was ordeyned to kepe the ston x men and v clerkes; and in this maner thei bode to Pasch. And tharchebisshop that hadde take Arthur in warde, seide, "Wite ye right well ye shall be kynge and lorde of this peple; now loke that ye be a gode man, and fro hens-forth cheseth soche men as shull be of youre counseile, and officers for youre housolde, euen as ye were now kynge, for so ye shall be with the helpe of god." And Arthur seide, "I put me holly in god and in holy cherche, and in youre gode counseile; therefore chese ye as ye seme be moste to the plesaunce of Ihesu criste; and I praye yow clepe to yow my lorde my fader." Than the archebisshop cleped Antor, and shewde hym the ansuere of Arthur. Thanne chose they soche counsellors as thei wolde; and be counseile of the archebisshop and certein of the barouns, Kay was made stiwarde. And of alle other thinges thei a-bode to Pasch, and than thei assembled alle at logres.

<sup>1</sup> The word "swerde" is repeated after "be" in the MS.

Whan thei were alle assembled on the Ester even, the archebisshop drough hem alle to his paleis, and rehersed hem the grete wisdom and the gode condiciouns that he fonde in Arthur. And the barouns seide, "We will not be a-gein godes ordenaunce; but it is vnto vs a mervelouse thyng that so yonge a man, and of so base lynnage, sholde be lorde and gouvernour of vs alle." The archebisshop seide, "Ye do not, as cristen men, thus to be a-gein cristes eleccion." And they seide, "We be not ther agein; but ye haue seyn his condiciouns and we ne haue not don so, and therfore we praye yow to suffre vs to knowe his condiciouns, and the manere of hys gouernaunce that he will ben of here-after." The archebisshop seide, "Will ye thus delaye his coronacion?" And thei seide, "We wolde that his sacringe and coronacion be respite to Penticoste. \*Thus we alle pray and requere." And the archebisshop it graunted. Thus departed alle the counseile; and on the morowe, whan high messe was seide, Arthur yede to the swerde and toke it oute as lightly as he hadde don be-fore. Than thei seiden alle that thei wolde haue hym to their lorde and gouvernoure, and thei praide hym to sette ther the swerde a-gein. And Arthur ansuerde to the barouns full debonerly, and seide he wolde do their requeste, or eny thinge that thei wolde of hym desire. Thanne they ledde hym in to the mynster to speke with hym, and to assaye his condiciouns, and seide, "Sir, we se well that god will that ye be oure kynge and lorde ouer vs, wherfore we will do to yow oure homage and of yow holde oure honoures, and we be-seke yow to respite youre sacringe in to Pentecoste, ne therfore shall ye nothyng be inteript, but that ye shall be oure lorde and oure kynge; but to this we praye yow to sey vs what is youre volunte." Quod Arthur, "Of that ye sey ye will do to me youre homages, and holde youre honoures of me, I may it not receyve, ne I ne ought not to do, ffor I may not to yow ne to noon other yeve noon honoures till I haue receyued myn; and ther ye sey ye will that I be lorde of yow and of the reame, that may not be by-fore that I be sacred and receyved the honoure of the empere; but the respite that ye desire I it graunte yow with

At Easter even the archbisshop rehearses to the people the wisdom of Arthur.

The barons say they are not against him,

but wish to delay his coronation till Pentecost.

\*[Fol. 35a.]

Arthur takes out the sword as lightly as before.

They ask him to set the sword back again.

They lead him to the minster to speak with him,

and beseech him to put off his sacring till Pentecost.

Arthur answers them,

and grants them the respite they require.

The barons  
say amongst  
themselves,  
"If this child  
lives he shall  
be right  
wise."

The barons  
bring Arthur  
jewels and  
other riches,

which he  
parts among  
the knights  
and others.

Arthur holds  
company  
with the wise  
men.

All praise  
him for his  
distribution  
of the gifts,

and find in  
him high vir-  
tue and great  
discretion.

All the ba-  
ronage as-  
semble at  
Logres.  
No man can  
remove the  
sword from  
the stone.  
The arch-  
bishop  
\*[Fol. 35b.]  
makes Ar-  
thur a  
knight,

and ad-  
dresses the  
people.

gode will, for I will not be sacred, ne nothinge that ther-to aperteneth, ne I may not with-ouen godes will and youre volunte." Thanne seide the barouns a-monge hem-self, "Yef this childe live he shall be right wise, and wele he hath vs an-suerde." And than thei seide, "Sir, vs semeth with youre advice that ye be crowned and sacred at Pentecoste, and by that terme we shull obbey to yow at the comaundement of this arche-bisshop." Thanne thei made be brought Iuellis and alle othir richesse, and yaf it to hym to se whedir he wolde be couetouse and cacchyng; and whan he hadde alle these yeftes resceyved, the booke seith he departed it; to knyghtes the stedes, and coursers, and fresshe robes; and to hem that we[re] Ioly and ennoisies, he yaf the Iuwellis; and to hem that were auerouse, golde and siluer; and to sadde wise men he yaf soche thinge as hym dought sholde hem plesse; and with hem he heilde companye, and en-quered in the contre what myght hem beste plesse.

Thus departed he the yeftes that were yoven hym, for to knowe of what condicion that he wolde be of. And whan thei sawgh hym thus demened, ther was noon but that hym gretly preysed in theire hertes, and seide that he sholde be of high renon, and that thei cowde not in hym espie no poynte of covetise; but as sone as he hadde the grete auers, he be-sette hem in soche manere, that euery man seide that noon cowde haue do better, euerych astate and degre. Thus thei assaide Arthur, and nought cowde fynde in hym but high vertu and grete discrecion. And so thei a-biden to the Witsontide. And than alle the baronage assembled at logres, and ther thei assaide a-gein at the swerde alle that assaie wolde, but neuer was ther founde man that it myght remeve fro the ston. And the archebisshop hadde ordeyned redy the crowne and septre, and all that longed to the sacringe. On witson even, be comen counseile of alle the barouns, the archebisshop made Arthur knyght. \*Alle that nyght dide he wake in the chief mynster, till on the morowe day. And whan it was day, alle the baronye come to the mynster. The archebisshop seide, "Sirs, lo here is the man that god hath chosen to be youre kyng, like as ye haue seyn and knowe.

And, lo, here is the crowne and the vestementz rioall, ordeyned by youre avys and alle the comen assent. And yef ther be eny of yow that to this eleccion will not assent, lete hym now sey." And they ansuerde and seide, "We acorde that in godes name he be sacred, and a-noynted with this, that yef ther be eny of vs that he be with displesed of that we haue be a-geyn his coronacion, that he pardon vs alle in to this day." And ther-with thei kneled alle at ones to Arthur, askynge hym mercy. And Arthur, for pite, gan wepe, and seide to hem,<sup>1</sup> "That lorde whiche hath graunted me to haue this honoure, mote yow pardon, and as moche as in me, I make yow quyte." And ther-with thei risen vp, and toke hym by-twene their armes, and ledde hym to the vestymentz rioall. And whan he was aried, the archebisshop was made redy to synge masse, and seide to Arthur, "Now go fecche the swerde, wher-with ye shull kepe Iustice to deffende holy cherche, and mayntene right and the cristin feith to youre power." And so they yede in procession to the ston. Thanne seide the archebisshop to Arthur, "Yef thow wilt swere to god, and to oure lady seint Marye, and to oure modir holy cherche, and to seint Petir, and to alle seyntes, to saue and to holde trouth and pees in the londe, and to thy power kepe trewe Iustice, com forth and take this swerde, wherby god hath made the eleccion vpon the." Whan Arthur herde this, of pite he gan wepe, and so dide many other. And he seide, "As verily as god is lorde ouer alle thynges, so he of his grete mercy graunte me grace and power this to mayn-tene like as ye haue rehersed, and I haue it well vndirstonde." And than he sette hym on his knees, holdinge vp his hondes, and than toke oute the suerde lightly with-oute greuaunce, and so bar it vp right. And thei ledde hym to the auter, and ther he leide the swerde. And than thei hym sacred and a-noynted, and dide that longed to a kyng. And after all the seruise was ended, thei yede oute of the mynstir, and come by the place ther as was the ston; and no man cowde knowe where it was be-come. Thus was Arthur chosen to kyng, and heilde the reame of logres longe in pees.

They agree that Arthur be anointed,

and kneel to him, asking his pardon.

They array him in the royal vestments.

They go in procession to the stone. The arch-bishop addresses Arthur.

Arthur weeps, and prays for God's help.

He kneels down holding up his hands, then takes out the sword and lays it on the altar. He is anointed. After the service they look for the stone, but it is gone.

<sup>1</sup> The words "to hem" are repeated in the MS.

## CHAPTER VII.

REVOLT OF THE BARONS ; AND DEFEAT OF THE SEVEN KINGS BY ARTHUR.

Arthur holds  
his court,

to which  
come king  
Loth,

king Urien  
of Gorre,

king Ventres  
of Garlot,

king Carados  
Brenbras,

king Aguy-  
sas of Scot-  
land,

and king  
Ydiers.

\*[Fol. 36a.]

Arthur  
makes them  
all rich pre-  
sents,

but they hold  
them in dis-  
dain,

and refuse  
them.

They give  
him to know  
that they do  
not hold him  
for their  
lord.

When Arthur  
understands  
their me-  
naces he gets

**A**noon after the myddill of August, after that Arthur was crowned, he helde court roiall, grete and mervelouse ; and theder come kyng loth of Orcanye, that helde the londe of loonois and a parte of Orkanye, and with hym v C knyghtes ; and thider come the kyng vrien of gorre, that was a yonge knyght, and moche preised in armes, and with hym iiij C knyghtes ; and theder also come kyng Ventres of Garlot, that hadde wedded oon of Arthurs susters, and with hym come vij C knyghtes ; and after com Carados brenbras, that was kyng of the londe of Strangore, and was oon of the knyghtes of the rounde table, and with hym vj C knyghtes welle horsed ; after that come kyng Aguyzas of Scotlonde, that was a freisshe yonge knyght, and with hym v C knyghtes ; after hym come kyng Ydiers, with iiij C knyghtes. Whan thei were alle assembled, Arthur dide hem grete honoure, and to hem \*made grete ioye and grete feste ; and for thei were so high astates and men of grete puyssaunce, he made hem riche presentes, and yaf hem grete yeftes and riche, as he that therof hadde hym wele perveied. Whanne these barons saugh the grete yeftes and the riche presentz that the kyng hadde hem yoven, thei heilde therof grete disdeyn, and seide a-monge hem-self, That grete foles were they, whan of soche oon as he was of so base lynage, sholde be kyng of so worthi a reame as is the reame of logres, and seide that thei wolde it no lenger suffre. And thanne thei refused the yeftes that the kyng hadde hem offred, and yoven, and dide hem wele to wite that thei heilde hym not for ther kyng ne lorde, but that he sholde in all haste voide oute of the londe and the contree, so that he were no more seyn ther-in ; and yef he wolde not voide the londe, and thei myght hym take, they lete hym well to wite that ther was no more but he sholde be deed. Whan the kyng Arthur vndirstode their manaces, he yede oute by a wyndowe of karlion, for he douted moche of



treson. And thus thei soiourned xv dayes in the town, that they dide noon other forfet on nother side. And than Merlyn entred in to the town, and shewde hym-self openly to the peple, as he that of alle peple wolde be seyn. And than be-gan in the town a gret tumulte and a mervelouse, and eueriche man seide, "Lo, here is Merlin." Whan the barouns vndirstode that Merlin was come, they sente after hym; and Merlin come be-fore hem mery and gladde. And whan thei saugh hym comynge, thei yede a-gein hym, and made of hym grete ioye. Than thei ledde hym in to a paleise vpon the river with-oute the town, in a faire medowe, and brought hym vp to a wyndowe a-lofte, where they myght se faire water, and a grete that yede aboute the wallis of karlion.

out of a window. Merlin enters into the town,

which sets all in a tumult.

The barons send after him.

They lead him to a palace.

When the barouns were come thider, they a-resoned Merlin, and asked what hym semed of the newe kynge that the archebisshop hadde crowne with-oute her lycence, and with-oute assent of the mene people of the londe? "Trewly," quod Merlyn, "thei haue don wele, and, knowe it verily, thei myght no better haue don." Than seide the barouns, "Merlin, how is this that ye sey; ne beth ther many in this reame of higher astate, and worthier men and wise, that were better worthi to resceyve that dignyte, than a boy that no man wote whens he is comen?" Quod Merlin, "Ye sey as ye liketh; but, knowe this verily, that he is of more gentill linage, and higher born that eny of yow; and I do yow to wete that he is nother sone to Antor, ne brother vnto Kay, that he hath made his stiwarde, saf only of norture." The barouns seide, "Merlin, how is this that ye sey so? now go ye more oute of reson than ye were wonte to do." Quod Merlin, "I shall telle yow what ye shull do: ye shull sende to the kynge Arthur, that he come in gode trewis, and Vlfin, the counsellor of Vterpendragon, and Antor, that hath be with Arthur euer vnto this tyme; and than shall ye here the trouthe as it is."

They reason with him about the new king.

Merlin says the arch-bishop has done well. The barons ask if there are not worthier men in the realm.

Merlin tells them that Arthur is higher born than any of them, and is not son to Antor.

He tells them to send for Arthur, and Vlfin, and Antor.

"Merlin," quod the barouns, "we will do after thi counseile, and we graunte well that he come and go suerly and saf, for so moche that thou doste vs prayen. But who shall

The barons agree to his counsel,

\*[Fol. 36b.]

and send  
Bretell with  
the message.

Bretell comes  
to the for-  
tress where  
the king is,  
and delivers  
the barons'  
message.  
He goes to  
Ulfyn to tell  
him that  
Merlin and  
the barons  
have sent for  
him.  
Ulfyn is glad  
and joyful.

He goes to  
the palace.

Arthur, the  
archbishop,  
and Antor  
come also.

The barons  
prepare to  
meet Arthur.

The arch-  
bishop ad-  
dresses them.

They beg  
him to wait  
till Merlin  
has spoken.

\*go on this message?" Than thei seide, "Bretel shall go yef Merlin assente." "And I graunte well," quod Merlin, "for he shall well do that is nede." Than the barouns called Bretell and charged hym with the massage, and than seide Merlin that Arthur sholde bringe with hym in his company the archebisshop. Than Bretell com to the maister forteresse where as the kynge was, and seide, "Sir, the barouns haue sente for yow and the archebisshop, and the bisshop of logres, by gode trewys," and he seide he wolde with gode will go speke with hem. Than Bretell yede to Vlfyn, and seide that Merlin and alle the barouns hadde sente for hym that he sholde come with-oute lenger a-bidinge. When Vlfyn herde that Merlin was come, and that he sente for hym to seche, he was glad and ioyfull, for than he knewe well that the trouthe of the kynge sholde be knowen.

Than yede thei bothe in to the paleis where as the barouns a-biden, and Vlfyn made gret ioye when he saugh Merlin, and than thei spake to-geder of many thinges; and on the tother parte come the kynge Arthur and the archebisshop, and Antor that many day hadde hym tendirly norysshed, and come to the paleis ther as the barons were a-bidinge after hem; but first hadde Arthur the kynge put on hym an habergon vndir his robes er he yede oute of the tour. And whan he was come be-fore the barouns, thei fonde moche peple that a-bode to hire what Merlin wolde sey in audience. Whan the barouns saugh Arthur comynge, thei dressed alle hem a-geyn hym for that he was a kynge a-noynted and sacred, and for love of the archebisshop, that was a gode man and holy of lyvinge. And than thei were alle sette saf, the archebisshop that a-bode stondynge on his feet and seide, "Sirs, for the reuerence of god, haueth pite of cristen feith that it be not a-peired thourgh yow, for it were grete damage and grete shame yef be yow it sholde be distresed, and considereth that eche of yow is but oon sole man, and as soone shall the hiest and the richest be deed as the porest creature of this Citee." "Sir," seide the barouns, "a-bide a-while till we haue herde Merlin speke, for hereafter ye may vs preche at leyser, for Merlin hath seide to vs a thinge that we haue more merveile of than we

hadde ener be-fore." Than the archebissshop sat down, and Merlin a-rose vpon his feet and seide, "Sirs, I haue be-gonne for to telle yow whos sone was the kynge Arthur, and I do yow to wite alle that beth here that he was the sone of Vterpendragon, that hym engendred on Ygerne the same nyght that her lorde was slayn vpon the brigge, when he issued oute for to assaile the kynge Vterpendragon. And on the morowe, whan the kynge was come a-gein to hys oste, I asked hym that hadde gete on the duchesse that nyght in rewarde of alle seruises that I hadde hym don, and he me graunted, that as soone as it were born, that he wolde make that it sholde be delyuered to me, and of this he dide me make letteres, and ther-on hanginge his seal, whiche that Vlfin hath yet in his kepyng in his bailly, and Vlfin hym-self was at the couenaunt makynge. After whan the kynge hadde wedded the quene Ygerne, she wax grete with the childe that the kynge hadde gete on her, er he hadde here wedded, and so it fill many tymes that the kynge hir blamed and remembred diuerse tymes, and seide that the childe that \*she was with grete, was not his, wherefore the quene was shamefaste, and discouered to hym the very trouthe, how the childe was be-geten the same nyght that the Duke was slain, as ye hau herde; and whan the kynge saugh and knewe that she hadde discouered to hym the trouthe as it was, he dide repente that he hadde made hir in hevynesse ther-of, for he loved hir moche more for her grete trouthe, and seide, 'Dame, seth it is so, that the childe is not myn in maryage, it were not right that it sholde enherite this reame, ne be kynge after me, and therefore I comaunde yow, as derely as ye me love, that as soone as ye be delyuered that ye make the childe be deliuered to the firste man that ye mete at the halle dore.' And the quene dede as he her comaunded, for she wolde in no manere do nothyng that were to hym eny displeaunce, and so was the childe deliuered to me the same nyght that it was born."

"**W**han I hadde this childe, I yede to the gode knyght that is here, Antor, and hym I delyuered þe childe, and praide hym that it sholde be norished vp with his wyfes

Merlin tells how that Arthur is the son of Uterpendragon,

who granted that as soon as the child was born it should be delivered to Merlin.

Merlin relates how the king blamed the queen,

\*[Fol. 37a.]

who discovered to him the truth.

The king repented that he had made her heavy.

He commanded her to deliver the child to the first man that she should meet at the hall door.

Merlin tells how he took the child to Antor

and prayed  
him to let his  
wife nourish  
it.

Antor bap-  
tised the  
child and  
named it Ar-  
thur.

Merlin says  
that God does  
not forget his  
servant  
though he be  
a sinner.

God sent the  
stone and the  
sword to  
show who  
should be  
king.

The barons  
ask if what  
Merlin has  
said is true,  
and Ulfyn  
and Antor  
say it is  
truth.

The arch-  
bishop reads  
Uterpendra-  
gon's cove-  
nant which  
Ulfyn gives  
him.

The people  
weep and  
curse the  
enemies of  
Arthur;

owne mylke; and so he dide, and put his owne sone, whiche was not fully of half yere age, to be norissed vp with a-nother woman. And thus is Kay brother to Arthur, as by hys moder brestes that he dide of sowke, whiche was wif to Antor; for Vterpendragon hadde hym ther-of tenderly praide be-fore, that he sholde do to the childe as I sholde hym comaunde; and so he hath don, god quyte it hym! and dide hym to be baptised, and cleped his name Arthur; and yet so is his name. And therefore, lordynges," seide Merlin, "I se well that god doth not for-yete his seruante, thow he haue be a synner, yef so be that he will be repentaunte, and hym serue with gode werkes. And therfore, of the gode fader and the gode moder oure lorde will yelde rewarde to the gode seede that of hem issued; for he sente the ston and the swerde, like as ye haue seyn, to make assay to alle the peple, who sholde be kyng. And therefore, knowe it well alle, that it is very trouthe that I haue yow tolde; and therefore also enquereth of Antor, that hath hym norissed." And than the barouns asked yef it were so. And Vlfyn and Antor seide it was trouthe, with-oute faile. "And ther-to," quod Vlfyn, "se here the letteres and the seall of Vterpendragon ther-on hanginge, that he lete make to Merlyn of the couenauntes." And than the arche-bisshop toke the letter, and redde it, herynge alle the peple euery worde, as Merlyn hadde rehersed to the barouns. And whan the peple of the londe herde this merveile, tho many begonne to wepe, and curse alle tho that were a-geyn the kyng Arthur.

Whan the barouns saugh that, and that the mene peple and the clergie hilde with Arthur, thei seide thei wolde neuer haue no bastarde to theire kyng, and many other repreves and vilonyes thei seide that I will not reherse. And the arche-bisshop seide he sholde be kyng and haue the reame of logres, who-so-ever ther-to wolde contrarye, seth that it was godes will, for he wolde hym helpe, and mayntene his londe, and to strengthe hym in his werre with all his power. And whan the arche-bisshop and the mene peple saugh the vntrouth of the barouns, thei heilde all to-geder with oon acorde with kyng Arthur.

but the ba-  
rons say they  
will have no  
bastard for  
their king.  
The arch-  
bishop says  
Arthur shall  
be king.

The mean  
people agree  
with him.

And the barouns fro thens departed in grete wratthe, and badde hym to be well ware, \*and lete hym wite that thei heilde hym not for no kynge; and fro hens-forth thei hym deffen and his helpes. Than thei yede to theire loggynges, and armed hem, and made to arme alle theire peple. And the kynge Arthur yede a-gein into the maister toure, and dide arme alle his meyne and his frendes. And whan thei were alle assembled to-geder, thei were well vij<sup>M</sup> on his partye, what of clerkes and of mene peple, but of knyghtes he hadde but fewe, and of tho that ther were it were but pore knyghtes; and to hem he yaf hors and harneise, and money to their exspensis; and were of hem iiij C and l. by counte, that seide thei wolde hym helpe, to live and dye with hym.

The barons depart in great wrath.  
\*[Fol. 37b.]

and arm themselves.

Arthur returns to the tower.

He has few knights on his side.

The king and his people come to the baill of the tower.

The barons and their people assemble in the town.

Merlin comes to the barons, and addresses them.

They make sport of his words.

Merlin returns to the king,

and tells him he will help him.

Whan the kynge and his peple were armed, and redy dight, they com to the baill of the toure well arrayde hem to diffende. And the barouns, as ye haue herde, were at here loinginges, to array their peple; and lepen to horsbak, and assembled in the town euerych at his baner, and were well viij<sup>M</sup> knyghtes, with-uten seriantz and arblastis, and fotemen grete plente. And whan thei were alle assembled, the barouns asked yef thei sholde go assaile the paleise ther the kynge was? And somme ther-to dide acorde, and somme seide that thei wolde ley siege environ the baile, and shet hem with-ynne, that thei sholde neuer be so hardy to ysse out of the toure. And as thei spake thus, com Merlin to hem, and seide, "Sirs, what is that ye purpose to do? Y do yow to wite ye will gete youre-self the werse, and shull lese ther-on more than ye shull wyne, ffor god will shewe soche wreche, that ye shull be full rebuked and foule shamed, the moste queynte of yow alle; ffor ye beth a-gein hym with wronge of the eleccion that the archebisshop hath made, like as ye haue seyn." "Now hath the enchaunter well spoken!" seide the barouns, and be-gonne for to Iape oon to a-nother. And whan Merlin saugh thei made Iapes of his wordes, he returned a-noon a-gein to kynge Arthur, and bad hym he sholde nothinge be dismaied, for he sholde not drede hem alle; ffor he wolde hym helpe so that the moste hardy of hem in the oste, er it were nyght, sholde wiesshe to be at home in his owne

contree. Than Arthur<sup>1</sup> toke Merlyn, and ledde hym a-parte, and the archebisshop and Antor and Kay and Vlfyn and Bretell, these vij were prevely in counseile. And than seide Arthur to Merlin,

Arthur addresses Merlin,

and prays him to counsel him,

and help to strengthen him.

\*[Fol. 38a.]

Merlin tells the king to have no fear.

The knights of the round table have gone to sojourn in their own countries.

King Leodegan of Tamalide.

His war with king Ryon,

who is a mighty king,

“Dere frende Merlin, I haue herde say that ye loved well my fader, Vterpendragon, as longe as he was lyuinge, and therefore I praye yow, for the love of god and for norture, that ye will me counseile in this matere, as ye knowe well these barouns do me grete wronge; and I wolde fayn and it plesed yow to be with me as ye were with my fader, and knowe it for trouthe, that I shall neuer do thinge that ought yow to displese to my power, and ye haue me holpen in my yowthe and in my tendirnesse, and therefore I praye yow helpe to mayntene and to strengthe me to kepe my \*londe, ffor by yow and by my fader, the archebisshop, and Antor, that hath me norished, am I come to this that I am atte, and therefore at the reuerense of god haue pite of me and of the mene peple that alle shall be distroied but god sette remedye.”

“Now dismaye yow nothings, sir,” seide Merlin, “for ye shall not haue no fere of hem; but as soone as ye be deliuerid of these barouns that beth here now come for to assaile yow, do that I shall yow rede and counseile. This is the trouthe, that the knyghtes of the rounde table, that was stablissed and founded in the tyme of Vterpendragon, youre fader, on whos soule god haue mercy, thei be gon to soiourne to their owne contrees, for the grete vntrouthe that thei syen in this reame. This is in the reame of kyng Leodegan, of Tamalide, that is an olde man and his wif is deed, and of alle his childeren is lefte but oon doughter, to whom the reame shall falle after his deth; and the kyng leodegan hath grete werre a-gein the kyng Ryon, that is kyng of the londe of Geauntes and of the londe of pastures, whar-in dar noon inhabite for diuerse auentures and merveiles that ther fallith bothe day and nyght.

“This kyng Rion, of whom I speke, is right myghty of londe and of peple, and full of high prowesse, and is right a

<sup>1</sup> The word “Arthur” is written over the words “the archebisshop” in the MS.

crewell man, and he hath conquered by force **xx**<sup>ti</sup> kynges crowned, fro whom he hath taken alle their berdes by force and in dispite, and sette hem in a mantell, whiche he maketh euery day a knyght to hold a-fore hym atte mete, atte alle tymes whan he holdeth courte rioall, and he hath sworn that he shall neuer finysse till he haue conquereth **xxx**<sup>ti</sup> kynges. This kynge werreth vpon leodegan, and in his londe doth grete damage. This leodegan marcheth to thy reame, and yef he lese his londe thou shalt lese thyn after; and vndirstonde well that he sholde haue loste his londe longe er this tyme ne were the knyghtes of the rounde table that mayntened his werre, for he is now in grete age, and therfore I rede that thou go and serue hym a-while, the kynge leodegan, and he shall yeve the his daughter to be thy wif, to whom the reame longeth after his deth, and she is right feire and yonge, and the wisest lady of the worlde of so yonge age; and of thy londe haue thou no doute, for eche of these barouns that now werreth vpon the, thei shall haue so moche to do, that litill shall thei forfeite in thy londe, but passinge thourgh the playn contrees; but er thou go, do garnysse thy forterresses of euery Citee, and euery castell, with vitayle, and men, and stuffe of other artrye; and the archebisshop shall a-curse alle tho that in thy londe eny thinge forfeite a-gein the or in thy contree; and the archebisshop hym-self shall shewe the cursynge in sight of alle the barouns that now ben here, and comaunde alle the clergie to do the same in heringe of hem alle, and soone after ye shall se soche thinges, by the helpe of god, that the proudest of hem shall be affraide. And wite ye well that I will be redy *with* yow in euery grete nede; and whan I crye to yow, 'Now vpon hem,' set forth boldely and smyte in a-monge hem, and wite it verily that thei shall be so a-baissed that litill thei shall \*yow disese, but alle thei shall be fayn to fle as discounfite."

"Sire," seide the kynge, "gramercy!" and than thei departed. And the archebisshop wente vpon the walles on high, and the kynge Arthur dide his peple make hem redy and lepe on horse, and in that maner-wise thei a-bide longe tyme. And Merlin made to kynge Arthur a baner wher-in was grete

and hath conquered twenty kings.

Hehassworn that he will not finish till he have conquered thirty kings.

Merlin counsels Arthur to help king Leodegan, who will give him his daughter to wife.

But ere he goes, Merlin counsels him to furnish the fortresses with victuals and men.

The Archbishop shall curse the barons.

Merlin will help the king in every great need.

\*[Fol. 38b.]

The archbishop goes upon the walls.

Merlin makes the king a banner with a dragon set on a sphere.

The king gives the dragon to Kay, as the chief bannerer of the realme of Logres.

The barons pitch their tent.

The archbishop curses them.

They say they will not cease till they have driven the king out of the land.

Merlin sets their pavilions on fire,

and runs to the king to tell him to fall upon them.

They are borne down, and much people is killed.

significacion, for ther-in was a dragon, which he made sette on a spere, and be semblaunce he caste oute of his mouth fire and flame, and he hadde a grete taile and a longe. This dragon no man cowde wite where Merlin it hadde, and it was mervelouse light and mevable; and whan it was set on a launce thei be-heilde it for grete merveile. Than toke the kynge the dragon, and yaf it to Kay, his stiwarde, in soche forwarde that he be chef banerer of the reame of logres euer while his lif doth dure. Thus arraied thys mayne the kynge Arthur, and a-bode in soche maner on horsbak be-fore the yate be-fore the paleis, and the barouns made picche her teynte and pavelouns thourgh the medowes that were large and faire. And whan the archebisshop that saugh, he asked what thei were come to seche so armed; and thei seide that thei were come to take the maister toure, which thei wolde no man sholde be Inne but by hem.

Than the archebisshop yaf the scentence full dolerouse, and cursed of god and with all his power allé tho that in the londe dide eny forfet, or were a-gein the kynge Arthur. And the barons seide that for eny cursinge thei wolde not cesse till thei hadde dryve the kynge oute of the londe; and yef thei myght hym take, thei lete hym knowe that he sholde not escape with-oute the deth. And whanne Merlin vndirstode their bobaunce, he caste his enchauntement, so that alle their logges and pavilouns were alle on fire a-flame. And thei ther-of were so a-baishshed that hem dought longe er thei myght gete out in to the medowes fro the fyre; but er thei myght come ther, thei caught grete harme, and foule were thei skorched with the fier. Merlin ran to the kynge, and seide, "Sir, now hastely vpon them!" And thei spronge oute at the yate, as moche as their horse myght renne, the speres on their asseles, their sheldes be-fore her bristes. And thei were so a-baishshed and affraide that the moste hardy of hem wolde fain haue be thens; ffor thei wende not that ther hadde be so moche peple with-Inne; for thei with-oute were sodenly many of hem born down with speres, and moche peple slain; ffor thei were so astoned with the hete of the fier that their deffence was but symple. There was grete



slaughter of men and horse. Ther dide Arthur merveillouse dedes of armes, that gretly he was be-holden, bothe on that oon part and on the tother; he ouerthrowe knyghtes, bothe horse and man, with stroke of spere and of swerde. And ther-to hadde the princes and barouns grete enuye, and assembled hem to-geder, and seide that it were grete shame yef he so escaped. And thei were noble knyghtes and hardy, and full of high prowess, and many of hem carnell frendes. Than seyde kyng Ventres of garlot that he wolde hem delyuere in short tyme, for yef Arthur oonly were deed, the werre of the remenaunt were soone fynysshed. "Goth on," seide the othir prynces, "and \*yef ye haue myster we shall yow socoure." Ther-with departed the kyng Ventres and his company, that was a moche man of body, and a gode knyght and yonge, of prime barbe; and he was meruelouse stronge, and he helde a shorte grete growen spere, sharp grounden, and rode agein Arthur.

Arthur does  
marvellous  
deeds of  
arms.

The barons  
assemble to-  
gether.

King Ventres  
of Garlot un-  
dertakes to  
kill Arthur.

\*[Fol. 39a.]

Whan Arthur saugh hym come, he dressed a-gein hym his horse hede, and griped a grete aisschen spere, the heede sharp trechaunt of stiell; than smote the horse with the spores, that it ran so faste and so briaunt, that alle hadden merveile that it be-helden. And he afficched hym so in the sturopes that the horse bakke bente, and smote to-geder so hetely vpon the sheldes that thei preceid thourgh. The kyng Ventres brake his spere vpon kyng Arthur, and Arthur smot hym a-gein so sore that he bar hym ouer the horse croupe, and his legges vp-right, that the erthe rebounded, but he hadde noon other hurte. And whan the kyng loth of Orkanye saugh the kyng Ventres ouerthrowen, he was wroth and sorowfull, for thei were bothe cosin germaines, and also thei hadde wedded two sustres. Than smote he the horse with spores a-gein Arthur, that yet hadde he his spere hoill. And whan he saugh the comynge of kyng loth, he come a-gein with grete hardinesse, as he that of hym hadde no dowte; and mette to-geder on the sheldis, so that the horse ne myght not passe farther till the tymbres were broken; and on the passinge forth thei hurtelid to-geder so fiercely, with sheldes and with her beyes and her helmes, that the kyng loth was so astonied that

Arthur pre-  
pares him-  
self.

King Ventres  
breaks his  
spear upon  
Arthur, who  
smites him  
off his horse.

King Loth is  
wroth at the  
fall of king  
Ventres,

and rushes  
upon Arthur.

They meet,

and Loth is  
thrown over  
his horse's  
croup.

The two  
kings, Ven-  
tres and  
Loth, are  
horsed again.  
Arthur  
draws out his  
sword, the  
same which  
he took out of  
the stone.

He smites a  
knight on the  
shoulder.

He smites  
about him  
right and  
left.

\*[Fol. 39b.]

All make way  
for fear of his  
strokes.

The seven  
kings are  
wroth, and  
agree to set  
on Arthur all  
at once.

They rush  
upon him.

he fley ouer his horse crowpe. Than a-roos grete noyse and cry on the oon part and the tother. Ther be-gan a grete stoure and mervellouse. The knyghtes that were with kynge Ventres peyned hem sore to socoure their lorde, and so dide the knyghtes of kynge loth; and Arthurs knyghtes peyned hem sore to helpe Arthur, and to take and holde these other two kynges. And so be-gan the medle on bothe parteis crewell and fellenouse. But with grete payne were these two kynges rescowed and horsed a-gein. Whan Arthur was releved, he drowgh his swerde oute of skabrek, whiche was so oler and bright shynynge as thei semed that it be helden that it glistred as it hadde be the brightnesse of xx<sup>ti</sup> tapres brennyng. And it was the same swerde that he toke oute of the ston; and the letteres that were write on the swerde seide that the right name was cleped Escaliboure, whiche is a name in ebrewes, that is to sey in englyssh, kyttynge, Iren, tymber, and steill; and the letteres seide trewe, as ye shall heeren here-after. Whan the kynge Arthur hadde drawen oute his swerde, he smote in to the prese, ther as he saugh thikkeste, and smote a knyght on the sholder, so that he made it discendir from the body; the stroke was grete and the swerde trenched, so that he slyt a-sonder the sadell and the chyne of the horse, that bothe the knyght and the horse fill on an hepe. And than he smote a-boute hym grete strokes bothe on the lefte syde and on the right side, and made so grete occision a-boute hym that all that it syen helde it grete mervelle, \*and ne durste not a-bide his strokes, but made wey and voided place for drede of his swerde and of his fell strokes.

Whan the vij kynges saugh the damage and the grete losse that they hadde thourgh hym, thei were wroth and right sorowfull, and seyde eche to other, "Now let vs alle sette on hym attones, and bere hym down to the erthe, for elles may we nothyngne conquere;" and to this thei acorded. Than thei henten speres grete and rude, and ronnen a-gein hym with as grete rannodon as their horse myght hem bere, and smyten hym on the shelde and on the haubrek, but is so stronge and sure that no mayle ne perced; but thei bar to hym so harde that Arthur

was throwe to the erthe, bothe he and his horse on oon hepe. And whan Kay and Antor and Vlfyn and Bretell, and other of Arthurs frendes syen this, Antor hasted hym to kyngē Carados, and met hym so hedylyche with a grete spere, that bothe the tymbir and stelen heede shewed thourgh his shuldre, and threwe bothe hym and his horse to the erthe, and lay longe in swowne. And Vlfyn and kyng Ventres of Garlot mette so sore to-geder, that ether bar other to the grounde, and the horse vpon hem. And the kyge ydiers and bretell brake their spers that oon vpon the tother, with-oute more harme doynge. And alle the tother barouns a-bode vpon the kyng Arthur, that yet lay at the erthe all stonyed, and thei smote on his helme grete strokes and pesaunt, so that thei made hym moche more astonyd. And whan Kay saugh that the kyng was at so grete myschef, he griped his swerde, and come ther the kyng was ouer-throwen, and smote the kyng loth vpon the helme that he made hym stoupe on the arson of his sadell, and leyde on hym so grete strokes that loth all astonyed, fill to the grounde. Than come thei to the rescowe, bothe on the oon and on the tother. Ther was grete bataile, and stronge stour, and grete slaughter, bothe of men and horse; and so peyned thei that were with kyng Arthur, that thei haue hym remounted on his horse; but firste hadde thei grete payne and traveile and grete losse, ffor the meene peple of the town were come oute with all wepen that thei myght haue deffensable. And the cry and the noyse rose thourgh all the contre, so that alle the commons hasted thider all that myghten, and seiden that thei wolden alle be deed on the same grounde, er that kyng Arthur hadde eny greef, as longe as thei myghten hym deffende. Than they smyten in a-monge the preesse of the vij kynges, that many thei dide sle and wounde, and so put hem to flight, whether they wolde or noon. And so thei yede discournte[d], but thei seiden thei sholde neuer haue gladnesse till they were venged, and that they wolde not take of Arthur but his heed.

\***T**he kyng Arthur, that was full wrothe, and Kay hem chased fiercely be-fore alle other. And so fill it that Arthur ouer-toke kyng ydiers, and wende to smyte hym on the helme,

Arthur is  
thrown to  
the earth.

Antor strikes  
king Carados  
with a great  
spear that he  
swowns.

Ulfyn and  
king Ventres  
meet.

King Ydiers  
and Bretell  
break their  
spears upon  
each other.

The barons  
smite Arthur  
on his helm.

Kay smites  
king Loth  
upon the  
helm.

There is  
great slaugh-  
ter both of  
men and  
horse.

Arthur is re-  
mounted.

The mean  
people of the  
town come  
out with  
weapons to  
assist  
Arthur.

They rush a-  
mong the  
seven kings,  
and slay,  
wound, and  
put to flight  
many of  
them.

\*[Fol. 40a.]

Arthur over-  
takes king  
Ydiers, and

bears him to the earth.

Ydiers' friends return to rescue him.

There is great damage done.

Neither horse nor man can endure against Arthur's sword. They remount Ydiers on horseback, and depart discomfited.

but the horse bar hym to faste, so that the stroke descended on the horse and slyt hym euen a-sondre be-hynde the sadill, and ydiers and his horse blusshet to the erthe; wherefore his men were gretely affraied leste he hadde be slain, and returned hym to rescowe, ther be-gan the stour grete and merveillouse, for that oon part peyned to with-holde and to take kynge ydiers, and on the to-ther syde thei peyned hym to rescowe, and so was ther do more damage and harme than hadde be all the day be-fore, ffor ther was neyther horse ne man that myght endure agein the swerde of Arthur, that was cleped Calibourne, that was all bloody of brain and blode so that his armes were so steyned that nought was seid but all reade. Neuertheless, so peyned ydiers men that they haue hym remounted on horse-bak, and so ben thei departed discomfited, and the chase lasted longe tyme, and so the vij kynges losten I-nough, for of all the harneys that thei hade brought thider, thei hadde not with hem the valew of ijd, that all ne was brente with the fier that Merlin made discende amonge their tentes and paelouns, saf only the vessels of golde and siluer and the money.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE MISSION OF ULFYN AND BRETELL TO KING BAN AND KING BORS.

King Arthur returns to Cardoell.

He gains the love of the poorknights.

He gets the love of much people.

Logres is now called London.

When kynge Arthur hadde discomfited the vij kynges, by the helpe of god and of Merlin, like as ye haue herde, he returned to Cardoell, in Walis, whan he hadde be at Karlion, and sente after sowderes ouer all, and yaf hem wagis, and horse, and harneyse, and robes, and so he be-come in grete love a-monge the pore knyghtes of the contree, so that thei assured hym and sworn that thei wolde hym neuer fayle while their lives endured. After this that Arthur hadde so don that hadde gete the hertes of moche peple. Than he stuffed his castelles, and townes, and Citees, and after heilde courte at logres, his chief Citee, that now is cleped london. This was on oure lady day in septembre, at

this courte that the kynge heilde, he lete make many newe knyghtes with his owne honde, whiche alle dide hym homage and fewtee; and than he yaf hem londes and riche yeftes, so that thei myght hem well mayntene and gouerne. And so the kynge gate hym grete love, so that fro thens-forth thei dide hym neuer faile for no drede of deth. And so hadde he of his peple grete socoure and helpe, as ye shull here her-after.

Arthur makes many new knights,

who never fail him.

**A**fter this that the kynge hadde made CCC knyghtes, as the story reherseth, and that he hadde stuffed alle his castelles with soche men as that Merlyn hadde yoven hym counseile, than Merlin toke hym in counseile, and seide—but at the counseile was Vlfyn, that right moche hym loved. And Merlyn seide, “Sir, I knowe a thinge that I will shewe to yow, and telle yow my custumes; this is the trouthe:—\*Ther is a man in Northumbirlonde, whiche is an hermyte, in the moste wilde place of all the foreste, and he is gretly my frende, and moche I hym love, for he deffended my moder oon tyme fro the deth; and I will telle yow how.” Than be-gan he to reherse his moder lif, and how she was ledde to be brente for a blame that was put vpon hir; and how Vortiger dide hym seche for his tour; and his moder was a nonne in an abbey where as he her lefte; and how the tour dide holde that Vortiger lete make; and the signification of the two dragounes, how that oon dide sle the tother; and how after the deth of Vortiger how he was a-queynted with Pendragon and Vter, and of the grete bataile where as Pendragon was slayn; and after how he was with his broder Vterpendragon, and how he made hym to ly with the duchesse Ygerne in the castell of Tintagell; and how he made the kynge in semblaunce of the duke hir husbonde, whan Arthur was be-geten; and how that Vlfyn devised the mariage of Vterpendragon and the quene youre moder, whiche hadde v daughteres by the Duke, hir husbonde, and two by hir firste husbonde; wherof the kynge loth hath oon doughter to his wyf, and the kynge Ventres of Garlot a-nother, and the kynge Vrien the thirthe, and Briadas the forthe, whiche is deed, and he was fader to Agnysas of Scotlonde; and the fyfte is yet at logres in gret bretein, at scole,

Merlin gives him counsel,

\*[Fol. 40b.]

and tells of Blase, who lives in Northumberland.

He tells his mother's story,

and of Vortiger's tower,

and how Uterpendragon lay with Ygerne.

How Ygerne had five daughters by the duke.

The fifth is at school.

Gawain, the  
eldest son of  
king Loth,  
shall be the  
truest knight  
of all the  
world.

Galeshyn  
and Ewein,  
the gaunt.

Two kings  
in Little  
Britain,

•[Fol. 41a.]

one called  
king Ban, of  
Benoyk, and  
the other  
king Bors, of  
Gannes.

whiche lerneth wele, and is right wise and connynge in grete clergie. And wite well that the kynge loth hath v sones by his wif, of whiche thow didest engendre that oon at logres whan thow were a squyer. And alle thei be feire yonge squyres, and the eldest hight Gawein. And wite thow well that he shall be the trewest knyght of all the worlde a-gein his lorde; also he shall be oon of the beste knyghtes of the worlde, and moste shall the love while his lif doth endure, and shall the helpe agein all the worlde and agein his owne fader; and ne doute not thorough hym shalt thow haue a-gein all thy londe, and also alle thy men that for drede of hym shall be full meke and fain to obbeie to the; where thorough thow shalt ouer-come thyn enmyes, and also be the helpe of his brothern, whiche shall be so noble knyghtes. And the kynge Ventres of Garlot, that is so gode a knyght, hath a-nother sone by his wif that is thy suster also; and he is a fayre yonge squyre, and is I-cleped Galeshyn. And kynge Vrien hath a-nother that hight Ewein le gaunte, that shall the helpe; and he hath alle bountees bothe of herte and body. These shall the love and serve euer to the deth; and wite thow well that thei shall neuer be dubbed of no man till thow a-dubbe hem and yeve hem armes. Thise shall make the a-queynted with many a gentilman that ben of high lynage, that for love of hem and of her company shall the serue as longe as thei shall lyve. And on that othe side, in litill Breteyne, ben two kynges, which ought to be thy men; and they haue wedded two sustres to their wyfes, and owen to holden their londes of the; and thei be men of high lynage, and be bretheren germain. These two bretheren shall haue sones whiche shall be merveilouse \*gode knyghtes, that in no londe shall be founde noon better. That oon of these two kynges is cleped the kynge Ban of Benoyk, and the tother is cleped the kynge Bors of Gannes. But thei haue an euell neighbour that marched nygh to theire remes, and he is a kynge, and werreth vpon hem, and shall yet here-after do hem grete payne and traueyle for enuye; and for that he may not hem now Iustice and ouerlede, and for that thei be so worthy knyghtes and so trewe. I will thow sende to hem, that thei

come to thy courte, and that thou woldest hem se, and with hem be aqueynted, and sey that gretely thou desirest her aqueyntance, and that thei be here at halowmesse, for than shalt thou holde thy courte at logres, and sende to alle the noble men of thi londe that will to the obbeyen. And somme shull come for gode, and some for euell; but thise two kynges shull come by theire debonertee, for thei be full worthy men and right trewe. And therefore, loke thou, a-queynte the with hem, and offre hem thy servyse, and thei shull conne the grete thanke, and thei shull do to the homage full gladly; and when thi courte shall departe, telle to hem thi counseile, and sey how thou wilt go in to Carmalide, to serve the kyng leodogan; and therefore lede hem with the, for thei be full noble knyghtes, and full of merveilouse high prowesse; and thou shalt haue to hem grete mystere at thy repyre a-geyn in to this londe, for thyn enmyes wolde deffende the fro the londe; but ther-to shall thei not endure ne haue power for the helpe of these two kynges that shull be in thy company. And I will well that thou wite my condiciouns be, that I gladly repeire in to forestes and wildernesses, by the nature of hym that me be-gat, for he loveth not to haue the company that is of godes be-halue; But I ne go not for his sake, but for the love of Blase, the holy hermyte. And knowe it verily that in every nede that thou haste, I shall redily be with the, to helpe the and counseile; but ofte tymes shalt thou se me in other semblaunce than thou doste now, for I will not that alle peple knowe me whan I speke with hem, or whan I speke with the; but I will that thou swere that thou shalt not me discouer to no man of thyng that I sey to the, ffor yef thou me discoure thou shalt haue therby more damage than thou woldest trowe." And the kyng Arthur swore to hym with gode will, like as he dide devyse, as he that was full ioyfull to haue his a-queytaunce and companye, and seide that neuer wolde he sey, ne do nothyng that sholde to hym displese by his power. And than Merlin hym assured of his londe, and seide he wolde helpe hym so well that he wolde deserue of hym grete thanke.

Merlin counsels Arthur to send for them to come to his court.

They will do him homage gladly.

Merlin will repair to forestes and wildernesses

but will help Arthur in his need.

Arthur swears not to discover who Merlin is.

Arthur sends  
for king Ban  
and king  
Bors to come  
to him at  
Hallowmass.

Thus Arthur sente Vlfin and Bretell for kynge ban and kynge bors, hys brother, and sente hem worde that as dere a[s] thei hym loved, to come to hym to logres in grete Breteyne, at the feste of halowmasse; ffor these two knyghtes were well a-queynted with these two kynges that thei wente to seche, for moche thei to-geder loveden, and well were aqueynted in the tyme of Vterpendragon. And thei passed ouer the see, \*and come in to litill Breteyne, and com thourgh the londe that was all wasted; and they fonde many townes brente and distroied. And so they come to a Citee that was cleped Beynoyk, that now is cleped Burges-in barre, and be-longinge to kynge Claudas de la deserte.

\*[Fol. 41b.]  
Ulfin and  
Bretell come  
to Little Bri-  
tain and find  
many townes  
destroyed.

The war be-  
tween king  
Claudas and  
king Ban.

This kynge Claudas of whom I speke claymeth a Castell that the kynge Ban hath closeth in his londe. And Claudas seide that the londe was his, and the kynge Ban seide, "Nay." And so be-gan the werre be-twene hem, grete and mervelouse, and longe endured the mortall hate be-twene hem, as longe as thir life dured. And so Claudas ran thourgh the londes of kynge ban er he hadde hym warned, and so he dide hym grete damage of prisoners that he toke in the Contree, and in townes that he fonde vn-walled, whiche he brente and distroied, and made grete slaughter of his peple, as he that was with-oute pitee, of that he myght haue the hier honde. But to the Castell that kynge ban hadde do closed, myght he nothinge do, for it was right stronge. This castell hadde kynge ban well stuffeth with men of werre, and in the maister forteresse hadde he sette a[t] Castelein, a right noble man and a trewe, that was cleped Grascien, and made his compere a godson of hys, that he hadden houe fro the fontstone, and was cleped after the kynge ban Bawdewyn, whiche was after full renomede, and full of grete prowess in the reame of logres, and in many other contrees, where as he dide many grete dedes of armes, of whiche is yet made no mencion, till that my mater com ther-to. But speketh of kynge ban, that was sorowfull and wroth for the damage that kynge Claudas hadde hym don with-oute diffynging. And than he assembled his power, and yede hym a-geyns in all the haste that he myght, at a passage that he sholde come by.

Claudas de-  
stroys the  
land.

King Ban's  
castle

at Castelein.

King Ban  
assembles  
his power.



When thise two hostes sholde mete ther was right grete bataile, and stronge stour, and grete slaughter on both partyes, for the kynge ban slough so many with his owne honde that the hepes lay in the feilde as it hadde be dede swyne or shepe. And so bar hym the kynge ban and his peple that the kynge claudas was putt to flight, and loste all his harneyse and his praye, and the prisoners that they hadde taken were rescowed. And on that othir syde, on that side that marched to gawnes, the kynge bors and his men entred and brente and distroide the londes of the kynge Claudas euen to the yates of his chief Citee that cleped la deserte, and toke alle the prisoners that he myght. And so he distroied all as he wente thourgh the contre, that with-ynne lx myle ye sholde not fynde an house in to herberowe but it were in roches or in seleres vnder erthe, but other habita-cion sholde ye noon fynde. And so was Claudas made pore and maat. And by that distruxion Claudas heilde hym \*so coy that he druste not werre no more in their londes longe tyme after; and after that he greved the two brethern more than thei dide hym, as ye shull here her-after. And so the messagers of Arthur fonde the contree distroied like as ye haue herde; and thei mer-veiled gretly how this myght be. And thei rode forth till thei come to Trebes, the castell that the kynge ban hadde do closed, whiche was right stronge, and stode on a high grounde.

In this castell was the quene Elein, the wyf of kynge ban of Benoyk, which was a gode lady and of holy livynge. And ther-to she was of wonder grete bewte, so that noon was founden feirer in no contre; and ther-to was she yonge, of the age of xvj yere, and hadde be but litill while be-fore be maried to the kynge Ban. And the kynge Boors hadde wedded the to-ther suster, that was a gode lady and gentell, and was the yongest of the two quenes. And whan Vlfin and Bertell come to Trebes, thei axed after the kynge Ban; and the peple seide he was at parlament with his brother kynge Boors of Benoyk. And whan thei vndirstode this, thei toke leve of the quene Elein and departed fro thens all armed, for the contre that thei sholde passe thourgh was not sure, for men of werre that ran thourgh the

There is great slaughter,

and king Claudas is put to flight.

King Bors and his men destroy the lands of king Claudas.

\*[Fol. 42a.]

The messengers of Arthur come to the castle of Trebes.

Queen Elein of wondrous beauty.

Ulfin and Bretell ask after king Ban, who is with his brother, king Boors.

londe. And more thei wolde haue don, but for drede of the two brethern that were kynges. And thei kepten streite Iustice, ffor alle tho that myght be take with eny forfet or robbery, thei were a-noon putte to Iustyse and distroide with-oute respite.

The two messengers meet seven knights of Claudas.

Whan these two messagers departed fro Trebes a five mile, thei saugh vij knyghtes of Claudas, men that repayreden thourgh the Contree to assaye yef thei myght ought wynne vpon the kynges bors or on the kyng Ban; but the contre was so voyde that they fonde nought to take, ffor the peple were fledde to stronge Citees and to stronge Castelles with all that thei hadden. Whan the two massagers saugh the vij knyghtes, than seide oon to

The knights agree to set upon the messengers.

a-nother of the vij, "See yonder two knyghtes, be-holde whiche horse thei ride; grete foles were we yef we sholde lete hem thus passe!" Than seide oon, "It semeth well that thei be not of this contree, for thei bere not the armes of this londe ne as knyghtes of this reame." "Trewly," quod oon of hem, "what-so-euer thei be, they seme to be worthy men, bothe by their armes and by theyr horses; and yef thei be in seruise, it sheweth well that they serue a gode lorde." "What forse," quod a-nother, "what-euer thei be, lete vs go take from hem their horse and their harneys, for ther-to haue we grete nede."

One of them rides after the messengers and calls to them to surrender.

Anoon oon of hem smote the horse with the spores, and ran crying after these messagers, and seide, "Sirs! ne passe no ferther, for yef ye do ye be but deed, yef ye be longynge to the kyng Ban or to the kyng Boors; but and yef ye be with the kyng Claudas, than haue ye no drede; for we kepe the weyes and the passages of this marche, that noon ne a-scape that is a-gein Claudas. And therefore we aske of yow the trewage, after the custom that we vse; for wite it well yow be-houeth to leue with vs youre horse and youre armes, and ye ascape, so ye may conne vs grete thanke; but for that vs semeth that ye \*worthy men, we lete yow passe a-lyve with-oute inprisonment, with this raunsom, to lese youre horse and youre harneyse." Whan Ulfyn

\*[Fol. 42b.]

Ulfyn tells him he is a bold speaker and not courteous.

vndirstode his manasyng, he seide, "Sir knyght, ne haste not to sore, for yet thow may come all be tyme. I knowe nought what thow arte, but thow arte a bolde speker, and also a grete a-vaun-

tour; and ille happe haue he that vylenis knyght that asketh eny tribute of eny trauellynge knyghtes; and thow arte nothyng curteyse. And wite thow well that thow shalt nother haue<sup>1</sup> oure horse ne oure harneyse so lyghtly as thow wenest, but er thow hem gete, thei shall be right dere solde." And when Bretel vndirstode how Vlfyn spake to the knyght, he seide, "Sir knyght,<sup>2</sup> in euyll tyme hast thou asked vs tribute." Than smote he the horse with the spores ageyn hym, and that other knyght com hym a-gein, gripyng his spere in the fewtre. And thei smeten to-geder vpon the sheldes so sore that they perced thourgh, and the spere heede of the knyght stynte on Breteles haubrek. And Bretell smote hym a-gein, that with so grete ravayn that the spere ran thourgh his left sholder that the heed shewede a span be-hynde. And he bar on hym so sore that he threwe the knyght to grounde, and his horse vpon hym. And he swowned for the grete anguyssh that he felte. And Bretell drowgh oute a-gein his spere that yet was hool. And than seide he to the knyght in scorne, "Sir knyght, now maist thow loigge here be leyser, and kepe these weyes, that noon ne ascape with-oute paynge of trewage." And than he rode a walop after Vlfyn, gripyng his spere. And Vlfyn saugh wele the lustynge of hym and of the knyght, and ther-of he was gladde, and moche he preysed Bretell. And whan thei were come to-geder, thei rode fourth a softe paas. Whan the vj knyghtes saugh theire lorde ouerthrowen and wounded, thei were sorowfull, and seide that neuer sholde thei be gladde er thei were a-venge. Than two of hem renged hem, and priked after the messagers as faste as the horse myght hem bere. And whan thei approched, thei ascryde hem, and manaced hem crewelly. And whan the messagers saugh hem two a-gein two, they returned her hedes, and bowed vnder theire sheldes as thei that were gode knyghtes and sure. And they mette to-geder alle foure, with alle theire myght of horse and man, and smyte to-geder with speres in the sheldes, so that thei fley on peces. And Bretell bar his spere so high that he

Bretell and the knight meet.

Bretell bears him to the ground,

and speaks to him in scorn.

The six knights are sorrowful.

Two of them ride after the messagers.

The two messengers and the two knights meet.

<sup>1</sup> The word "haue" is repeated in the MS.

<sup>2</sup> This word is spelt "kynght" in the MS.

The knights  
are over-  
thrown.

Two more  
make ready  
to avenge  
their fellows.

\*[Fol. 43a.]

Bretell and  
Ulfyn bear  
them to the  
ground,

and then go  
on their way.

They come to  
Benoyk,

and alight at  
the palace.

They hear  
that the two  
kings are in  
counsel to-  
gether.

smote his felow a-bove the shilde, that the haubrek rente, so that he sente the hede and the shafte thourgh his throte, and so he fill to grounde vp-right. And Ulfyn hitte so his felowe thourgh shelde and haubreke, that the spere hede wente thourgh the lyfte sholder, that he fill to the erthe ouer his horse crowpe.

After this made them redy two of the tother foure for to ouer-take them that hadde theire felowes slayn. They ascryde the two messagers, and seide that thei sholde dye for thei wolde a-venge theire felowes at hir power. And whan they saugh hem come, thei turned the hedes of theire horse, and that oon requyred the tother to do well. And than thei mette to-geder in a valey, and Ulfyn lete renne to hym that com a-gein hym, and Bretell a-gein the tother. The two knyghtes brake theire speres vpon the two massagers; and Bretell smote so his felowe that he slyt the shilde and the haubrek to rente, that the spere yede thourgh the body, and bar hym to grounde all blody and deed. And Ulfyn smote his felowe so sore that he fill to the erthe, and his horse on his body, and in the fallynge he brake his nekke. Than seide Bretell to hem, "Sirs, now may ye manace vs, and ther-to I yeve yow leve to kepe the weyes and the passages." At these wordes lowgh Ulfyn for merthe. Than yede these two massagers forth theire wey, and trauaylde forth all the day wery, and for the traueile of the bataile that thei hadde agein the knyghtes, so that by euen thei come to Benoyk, where thei fonde grete plente of peple; ffor the kynge ban hadde sente for the kynge Boors his brother, and hys barouns with hym, that moste were of his counseile. The two messagers rode thourgh the town, till thei come to the maister paleise, and ther thei a-lighten, and toke theire horse and their armes to a squire to kepe, that thei hadde brought with hem with-oute mo meyne. Than yede thei vp in to the paleise, and asked after kynge Ban and his brother the kynge Boors. And it was tolde hem how they were in a chamber in counseile soole by<sup>1</sup> hem-self. And than were the messagers gladde that thei hadde hem founden so

<sup>1</sup> The word "by" is repeated in the MS.

to-geder. And thei a-bode till that the two kynges hadde made ende of her counseile. And as they a-bode so, com to hem a knyght that highte Leones, and brought with hym a knyght that he moche loved, and his name was Pharien. Thise tweyne come to the messagers, and hem asked what thei were, and thei ansuerde that thei sholde sone knowe, yef it plesed hem to a-byde so longe till thei hadde seide theirre message to the two kynges. And when these other herde hem so sey, thei a-vised hem better, and knewe hem wele. And than thei toke hem in armes, and made hem grete ioye, as thei that longe tyme had to-geder loved from theirre childehode. And than thei asked yef thei hadde grete haste; and thei ansuerde, "Ye, right grete." Than thei toke them be the hande, and ledde hem in to the chamber where the two kynges weren, and whan the two kynges hem saugh, thei yede hem a-geins, for thei knewe well, that soone after sholde they here tydynges, and Leones a-resonde hem, and seide to the two brethern, and seide, "Lo, here two messagers of the grete Breteyne that beth come to speke with yow." And the kynges seide they were welcome; and than thei made of hem grete ioye, as thei that moche hem loved, and than thei seeten down, and than the kyng ban asked what nede hadde brought hem in to that contre, for with-oute cause ye be not come hider; and after he axed of tydinges of the londe that thei come fro, and yef the barons hadde yet a kyng after her in-tente, for well knewe thei of the stryfe and of the eleccion, and how the swerde and the ston that apered on the feeste of voole be-fore the mynster. \*Than the messagers tolde hem trouthe all as<sup>1</sup> it hadde be by-twene the kyng Arthur and the vii kynges, and the grete damage that Merlin dide hem with the fire, and how grete merveiles of armes the yonge kyng dide; and after thei seide their message, how Arthur hadde sente hem to seche, be the counseile of Merlin, and whan they hadde seide all their message fro the be-gynnyng to the ende, Vlfin praide hem to take here counseile, and to yeve hem ansuere hastely, for the terme was

The messengers wait till the kings have ended their counsel.

Leones and Pharien come to them,

and take them in their arms and make great joy,

and lead them to the kings.

Leones introduces them to the two kings.

King Ban asks what has brought them to this country, and asks for tidings of the land they have come from.

\*[Fol. 43b.]

The messengers tell of Merlin, and of the marvels of arms done by Arthur.

Ulfin asks for an answer quickly.

<sup>1</sup> The word "as" is repeated in the MS.

The kings say they fear to leave the country because of king Claudas.

The messengers tell them that Merlin sent them word not to fear.

The kings marvel at Merlin's knowledge, and agree to go on the third day.

King Ban takes the messengers into his house.

The two kings ask them about their shields.

They tell how they were assailed by seven knights.

The two kings praise them greatly.

Leonces and Pharien give the messengers good cheer.

The kings leave their lands in the keeping of Leonces and Pharien.

but shorte, and theire nede grete. And the two brethern that were kynges seide that they were greved gretly with a werre, that they hadde agein the kynge Claudas, "and therefore we drede whan<sup>1</sup> we be oute of the Contree, that they falle not vpon vs, for so myght we haue grete damage." "Sir," seide the messagers, "that ne wolde we not, but Merlin sente yow worde, that ye sholde haue no drede as longe as ye be in this viage."

Whan the two kynges vndirstode that, that thei hadde seide, they mervailed moche of Merlin that thus knewe of the thynges that shull be-falle; and than they graunted to the Messagers that thei sholde meve the thirde day, and thei hem thanked with gode herte. Than thei made hem to vn-arme hem, for the kynge ban wolde not haue hem at noon other osteill, but in his house; and whan thei were vn-harneysed, theire armour was gretly be-holde, and they seiden alle that the messagers hadde but litill be by the fire ne stonde be the chymney. Than the two kynges come to hem and asked hem where theire sheldes hadde be so arrayed, and chargede hem be the feith that they ought theire lorde, that thei sey the trouthe. Than they tolde how they were assailed by vij knyghtes, and all as it was be-falle, as ye haue herde be-fore, "and," quod they, "thanked be god we haue do so that we beth now here." And whan the two kynges herde that they were so delyuered fro the vij knyghtes, they praysed hem gretly, neuertheles they knewe wele that they were worthy knyghtes, and gode men and trewe. Than made the kynge Ban the messagers to be sette, and serued with riche seruyse and deynte metes, as he that wele cowde it do, and Leonces and Pharien moche peyned hem to serue and make chere, for longe hadde thei be aqueynted to-geder in the grete Breteyne in the tyme of Vterpendragon. A-noon kynge Ban and his brother arayed hem to move the thirde day, and Comaunded theire londes in the keypyng of Leonces, and Pharien, that was theire cosyn germanyn, and a gode man and right a trewe; and Pharien in his companye, and the stywarde of Benoyk, and they of the reame

<sup>1</sup> The word "when" is written in the MS. before "whan," but is struck through.

of Gannes, whiche were full worthy men; and the two kynges comaunded hem, yef they hadde nede, that they sholde sende to hem for socour, and lete hem wete how it was with hem. And the kyng ban toke gode tokenes that they sholde sende to the barouns of the londe, yef nede were, and the tokene was a rynge of hys fynger, that who-so brought hem that rynge they sholde yeve credence to the message that it brought. And than thei departed, and sped so here Iourneys that thei com to the see, \*and entred in to the shippes, and passed ouer with-oute eny lettynge. But now cesseth the tale of hem, and returneth to speke of kyng Arthur, that is lefte at Logres.

The token of the ring.

The kings depart, and pass over in ships.

\*[Fol. 44a.]

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE VISIT OF KING BAN AND KING BORS TO ARTHUR; AND THE TOURNAMENT AT LOGRES.

Now, seith the storye, that whan the massagers were departed from Arthur, and that he hadd stuffed his Citees and euery castell with soche peple as that Merlin hadde hym counseiled, for he knewe well whiche were gode and trewe, and he wiste also whiche were with-oute treson. And whan all this was don, Merlin come to hym and seide, "Sir, be gladde and mery, for Vlfin and Bretell haue well do theire message." And than Merlin tolde what aventure hem fill by the wey, and how they were assailed of vij knyghtes, and how thei hem delyuerd, and how they haue spoke with the two kynges, and how thei be now entred in to the see, and how thei haue lefte here londes in kepyng of the two knyghtes, and also of the tokene of the rynge. "Now, beith well a-vised that ye resceyve hem so worshipfully as soche high men and grete of astate and high renon, and they ought to be youre men, and they beth I-born of the highest lynage of the worlde, and moche higher than ye be youre self, and so be theire wyves also." And the kyng seide to Merlin, "I pray yow telle me how I shall do and how I shall

Arthur stuffs his cities and castles with people.

Merlin tells him of Vlfin and Bretell;

how they were assailed by seven knights, and were now returning with the two kings.

He advises him to receive them worshipfully.

Arthur asks Merlin's advice,

whotells him  
to hang the  
streets with  
rich cloths,  
and make  
damsels to  
sing carols.

The kings  
will come on  
Sunday.

The grand  
procession of  
the king with  
his barons  
and the arch-  
bishop to  
meet the  
kings.

Arthur gives  
great gifts to  
the two kings'  
followers by  
the counsel  
of Merlin.

Arthur is be-  
loved by rich  
and poor.

The carols  
and the  
dances.

\* [Fol. 44b.]

The weather  
is fine.

me contene, and I shall do as ye me comaunde." Thanne Merlin taught hym how he sholde do: "hange the stretes ther thei sholde come with riche clothes, and make alle the dameselles to synge carolles and to go ageins hem synginge oute of the town, and ye youre self shall ride agein hem." "And whan shull they come?" seide the kynge. Quod Merlin, "They shall be here on sonday er pryme." And the kynge seide he wolde do as [he] hadde devised, and Merlin taught hym all how he sholde hym gouverne. Thanne Arthur made his ordenaunce to resceyve the two kynges, and a-bode in soche wise to the sonday. And the kynge and hys barouns were on horse bak, and the archebisshop yede a-gein hem with grete procession; and ther as they dide mete, grete was the ioie and the wurship that eche of hem did to other, and so they entred in to the town alle to-geder, and ther<sup>1</sup> thei were met with caroles and daunces, and with all maner of ioie. And whan they were come to the paleise, the kynge Arthur yaf grete yeftes to the meyne of the two kynges, after the astate and degre that they of were: ffor he yaf horse and palfreyes, and robe and armures full feire and riche; and all this he dide by the counseile of Merlyn. And so was Arthur gretly preysed and moche beloued a-monge grete and riche and pore, and in especiall of hem that neuer hadde hym seyn, but for the reporte that was of hym. Gretly they merveled where he myght haue alle the richesse that he ther yaf, so that with-Inne litill tyme, all that reseyred a-bowte hym hadde so grete love to hym, that thei sworn thei wolde hym neuer faile.

**T**han these lordes entred in to the Citee of Logres, be-gan the caroles and the daunces of the ladies and damsels, and the turnementes of yonge bachelers, that all the day dured till the nyght, and the town was thourgh hanged with clothes of silke, \*and it was feire wedir and clere, for it hadde not yet nothir reyned ne snowed ne frosen, but was as stille as a-boute aust; and the stretes were strowed with small grasse, and incense and myrre in fires in the stretes thikke, and in the wyndowes

<sup>1</sup> The word "ther" is repeated in the MS.



many lightes, and so swote sauoured thourgh the Cytee that fer men shulde fele the odour. Thus come the lordes to-geder in to the maister mynster, and where as the procession hem a-bode and receyued hem fro fer with humble reuerence: that day songe the archebisshop masse, and whan it was ended they yede vp in to the grete paleyse, where as the mete was arraide with all the coriouse ordenaunce that myght be don, and the thre kynges were sette to-geder at oon table, and the archebisshop, and Antor that hadde norischid Arthur; and kay serued at tables as was reson; and two yonge knyghtes of grete prowesse, and were sones to tw[o] casteleins, that oon was cleped Lucas, the boteler, and that other Gifflet, the sone of doo of Cardoell, which hadde be maister forester to Vterpendragon, and thei serued with the stiwarde, and with Vlfin and Bretell, that wele cowde hem enforme so that thei were well serued and richely.

The lords come to the minster, where the archbishop sings mass.

They return to the palace.

Kay serves at table.

Lucas the butler, and Gifflet.

**A**fter mete was the quyntayne reysed, and ther at bourded the yonge bachelers, and after they be-gonne a turnemente, and departed hem in two partyes, and were well on eyther syde vij C and CCC of the reme of Benoyk, that kepte hem to-geder in oon partye, and whan the turnemente was assembled redy to smyte to-geder, the kyng ban and the kyng Boors, and her brother that was a mervilouse clerke of Astronome, noon in that tyme so expert saf Merlin. These were lenyng out at wyndowes, and Arthur and the archebisshop with hem, and Antor, that thei wolde not leve be-helden the turnement on bothe partees, and saugh the signes, and the stedes to neye and crye and to prounce vnder knyghtes and bacheleres, that the hilles and the medowes resounded all a-bowte.

The quintain is raised.

The young bachelors divide into two parties for a tournament.

Kings Ban and Boors, with Arthur, the archbishop, and Antor, see the tournament from the windows.

**A**nd whan thei were so nygh assembled, than departed oute of the reinge a knyght that was cleped Gifflet, the sone of doo of Cardoell, that satte vpon a grey stede that mervelously was swyfte, and on that other part com a-gein hym a knyght of benoyk, that was cleped ladynas, and he was of grete renon, and he sette a-gein Gifflet as faste as the stedes myght renne, their shelde a-boute their nekkes, gripyng the speres, and thei smote to-geder in the sheldes so grete strokes that bothe brake their

Gifflet meets Ladynas.

They break their spears.

They fight so  
fiercely that  
they bear one  
another to  
the earth.

Every man  
ranged him-  
self on one  
side or the  
other to res-  
cue the two  
knights.

Great deeds  
of one  
knight,  
\*[Fol. 45a.]

named Lucas  
the butler,  
who was  
cousin to  
Gifflet.

None can en-  
dure his  
strokes.

The three  
kings praise  
him much.

None know  
who will get  
the better.

The two who  
had the great  
encounter  
are horsed.  
Gifflet does  
great deeds  
of arms.

Three hun-  
dred knights  
of Benoyk  
come to help,  
and three  
hundred on  
the other  
side.  
Hard strokes  
are smitten.

"Many feire  
cheualries"  
are done on  
both sides.

speres, for bothe were they gode knyghtes and couetouse to gete worship; and they-mette so to-geder with helmes and sheldes so fiersly, that they semede the yen fill from theire hedes, so eche bar other to the erthe, and theire horse a-bouen hem, and bothe lay longe in sowowne that thei semed deed, and euery man seide that they saugh neuer so crewell in-countre be-twene two knyghtes.

With that they renged hem on that oon part, and on that other for the rescewe of the two knyghtes. At the metynge of this turnement was sein many Iustinges, that gladly were be-holden, and some ther were that threw other to the erthe, and some that brake theire shaftes with-oute fallynge to grounde. Whan the speres were broken, thei drough oute swerdes, and be-gan the turney grete and huge; and ther was oon knyght that dide many mastryes \*of armes with his body, of whom was moche spoken and preysed thourgh the Contree, and was cleped Lucas, the boteler, and was cosin germain to Gifflet, that had the grete encourtir. This Lucas smote down knyghtes and horse, and be-gan soche dedis of armes, that noon myght his strokes endure. He arached helmes fro hedes and sheldes fro nekkes, and be-gan to do so well, that it was merveile him to be-holde, and the thre kynges preysed him moche, and so dide many other. Grete was the turnement in the medowes by Logres, vpon the ryver of Temse, and longe it endured, that noon ne wiste who sholde haue the better, for on bothe sides were many worthi men, and longe it was er the two were releved that hadden the grete encountre. And whan thei were horsed, thei smeten in to the turnemente, and tho gan Gifflet to do soche dedes of armes, that he and Lucas, the botiller, that thei gate place vpon hem of Benoyk, and put hem fer bakke in the playn feilde; and than com hem to helpe the CCC knyghtes of Benoyk that yet ne hadde no stroke smyten, and on that othir syde come also CCC all fressh, and so eche ran to other. There was grete stour and merveillouse and harde strokes smyten, and whan the speres were broken thei leyde honde to swerdes, and be-gan the chaple so stronge and dured longe tyme. Ther men myght se many feire cheualries don on bothe parties, for ther were many yonge bachelers that

dide right wele; but, a-bove alle other, Gifflet, the sone of Do of Cardoell, and Lucas, the botiller, these tweyn were preised of prowesse a-bove alle other. Whan the turnemente hadde longe indured and they were somdell wery for traueyle, than lept kay, the stywarde, oute of his enbusschement, that yet hadde no stroke smyten, he and other v felowes that were well horsed, and theire shildes a-boute her nekkes, theire launces in their hondes, and whan thei aproched the renges, thei smote in a-monge hem as faucouns amonge starlinges, and bar the firste that thei mette to grounde; and whan theire speres were broke thei drough oute swerdes, and be-gonne to do soche maistryes and dedes of armes, that kay hadde the prys and the wurship of the turnemente on that oon part, and on that other part Gifflet and Lucas, the boteller; and the beste after hem, was Marke de la roche, and Guynas le Bleys, and drias de la foreste sauge, and Belyas, the amerouse, of maydens castell, and Blyos de la casse, and Madyens le crespes, and Flaundryns le blanke, and Grassien, the castelein, and Placidus le gays: these dide so well whan thei come to the turnement, that noon myght agein hem endure; but after that the felowes of the reame of benoyk dide so wele, that they made all the turnement resorte bak to theire firste place, for the feliship of the table of Logres were gon oute for to chaunge helmes, that weren to hewen and rente; and whan thei saugh theire party turned to disconfiture, thei hem hasted and henten speres, and come in to the turnemente as faste the horse myght hem bere, and smote in a-monge the grettest presse, and kay cam before alle his felowes as he that was desirouse to shewe his knyght-hode, and griped a grete growen spere, and he was a merveillouse gode knyght, yef he ne hadde not be so full of wordes, for his euell speche made hym to be hatid of a-monge his felowes, and \*also of straungers that herden of hym speke, that after refuseden to go in his felisshep to seche a-uentures in the reame of Logres, that after endured longe tyme, as this boke shall rehearse here-afterwarde. This tecche hadde kay take in his norice that he dide of sowke, ffor he hadde it nothyng of norture of his moders, ffor his moder was right a gode lady and wise and trewe;

Gifflet and Lucas the butler are praised for their prowess above all others. Kay leaps "oute of his enbusschement," and five fellows well horsed.

They smite in among the others like falcons among starlings.

Kay is greatly praised.

Marke de la roche, Guynas la Bleys, Drias de la forestesauge, Belyas, Blyos de la casse, Madyens le crespes, Flaundryns, Grassien and Placidus do great deeds. The fellows of Benoyk do well.

When they see the discomfiture of their party they return and smite in among the greatest press. Kay is before all his fellows, and he would be a marvelous good knight, if he \* [Fol. 45b.] was not so full of words, which make him to be hated. This fault he took from his nurse.

His mother

was a right good lady. Kay is full of mirth and japes in his speech, and is one of the best fellows that could be found.

Hemeets Lydonas, who had done well all the day.

and casts him to the ground.

He then overthrows Gracien, of Trebes, and cries Clarence, the sign of king Arthur.

Kings Arthur, Ban, and Boors praise Kay greatly.

Lucas the butler smites Blios to the ground,

and is much praised for his great deeds.

Gifflet sees Blioberes and two of his fellows setting upon Kay.

Placidus had hit Kay on the helm.

but of what kay seide, his felowes that knewe his costomes ne rought neuer, but he was full of myrthe and Iapes in his speche, for seide it for noon euyll will of no man, and ther at lough thei gladly that knewe his maners, and on that othir syde he was oon of the beste felowes and myriest that myght be founde. Whan he was come to the turnement, as ye haue herde, he mette with Lydonas, that wele hadde do all the day, and moche he and his felowes peyned to dryve hem of Logres oute of the feilde, and so thei were nygh at disconfiture. And whan kay saugh this he was sory and wroth. Than he smote in to the presse, and mette lydonas in the shelde so sore that he perced thorough-oute, and the spere poynte stynte oute at the haubrek, and he shof so harde, that he caste hym to the grounde vp-right; and with the same course he smote Grascien, of Trebes, that he ouerthrewe hym and his horse. Than he leyde honde to his swerde, and cride Clarence, the signe of kynge Arthur; and they be-heilde hym, and saugh the socour that he brought, for they wende they hadde all loste. Than they returned, and be-gonne to do so well that they hadde not do so well all the day be-fore.

**T**his Iustynge that Kay hadde don saugh well the kynge Arthur, and the kynge ban and the kynge Boors, his brother, and they preysed moche kay, and seide he was wight and deliuere, and thei be-heilde hym gladly. And whan Lucas, the botyller, saugh kay hadde don so well, he smote the horse the spores in to the grettest presse, and smote Blios so harde that he fill to the grounde, and the spere fly on peses. Than he pulde oute hys swerde and spronge in a-monge hem, and be-gan to yeve grete strokes and to do so well, that moche he was preysed, and so be-gan the turnement newe to enforse for the rescuwe of their felowes. Than com Gifflet freschely armed, his spere in fewtre, as faste as his horse myght hym bere, and saugh Blioberes and two of hys felowes that leyde on kay, the stiwarde, with here swerdes, and heilde hym so shorte that he hadde grete nede of helpe, for thei were thre and he was but alone, and also they were thre the besté of all the turnement, and Placidus hadde hitte kay on the helme, that he leped on his sadill bowe; and whan

Gifflet sye this he for-thought it sore, and he smote blioberis so harde, that he fill to the erthe, bothe he and his horse, and the spere fly on peces, and leide honde to his swerde, and smote Placidus on the helme that he bowed ouer the arson of his sadell, and after leyde on hym so grete strokes, that he was so astooned that he fill to the erthe vp-right, and kay hym dressed, \*that grete nede hadde of that socoure, and after be-heilde and knew that it was Gyfflet that so hadde hym delyuered, and thought to quyte hym that bountee yef he myght; and so he dide withynne shorte tyme, as ye shall heren heir-after, and for that thei felishiped first to-geder, and woued well to-geder longe tyme after of grete love alle the dayes of her lyf. Whan Gifflet hadde delyu[er]ed kay, as ye haue herde, he loked a-boute hym and saugh Ieroas, that moche hadde greved in that stour; than he griped his swerde and ran vpon hym for ire, and yaf soche a stroke that the fire fley oute, and ther-with he kytte a pece of his helme, and but the swerde hadde swarved, he hadde ben deed for euer-more. The stroke descended vpon the lifte sholder, that he fill to the erthe all bloody. Than arose the noyse and the crye, for well wende thei that this syen that he hadde be deed with-oute recouer. Than come his felowes to the rescowe, and on that other parte com the felowes of kay, the stywarde. Than be-gan the medle grete and hidouse, that many were wounded and ouerthrowen er that other was rescowed and sette on horse; and the fyve felowes that were be-fore rehersed, whan thei saugh the medle so be-gonne, thei smot so v of the first that thei metten that thei blushit to the erthe; than thei smyten in amonge hem, and be-gan to do so well, that all hadde merueile how they myght it suffre or endure. Ther be-gan a-gayn the turnement on bothe partyes, and well thei dide in armes on that oon part and that other, Till it drough towarde evenesonge, that the thre kynges descended from the paleise and com in to the place where as was the turnement, and saugh that thei heilde hem euen like, that noon ne wiste wele whiche hadde the better. Than com the thre kynges, and hem departed and seide it was tyme to cesse, for it was to late eny more to turney, and so were they departed, and eche yede to his ostell to

Gifflet smites  
Blioberes to  
the earth,

and smites  
Placidus on  
the helm,  
so that he  
falls to the  
earth.

\*[Fol. 46a.]

When Kay  
knew that  
Gifflet had  
delivered  
him he  
thought how  
to requite  
him.

These two  
loved one an-  
other all the  
days of their  
life.

Gifflet sees  
Jervas, and  
runs upon  
him with his  
sword, and  
cuts off a  
piece of his  
helm and  
nearly kills  
him.

A great noise  
and cry a-  
rises, and  
Jervas's fel-  
lows come to  
his rescue.

The fellows  
of Kay also  
come.

Then begins  
"the medle  
grete and  
hidouse."

The five fel-  
lows smite  
five of the  
first that  
they meet,  
and do great  
deeds.

The tourna-  
ment begins  
again on both  
sides, and  
continues till  
near even-  
song, when  
the kings de-  
scend from  
the palace,  
and seeing  
that both  
sides are  
equal, say it  
is time to  
cease.

Each goes to his castle to rest. The kings go to hear even-song, and then to supper. They ask who had done best. They say king Ban's fifteen knights had done best.

They praise Kay, the steward, Lucas, the butler, and Gifflet.

The three kings, the archbishop, Antor, and Guynebaus go into a chamber. \* [Pol. 466.]

Ulfin and Bretell go with them.

Arthur laughs when he thinks of the words of Merlin.

He commands Ulfin and Bretell to tell the truth; how they had sped in their message. They look on one another and smile. Bretell says it is no good to tell him, because one has told him before.

Ban asks who it is that has told him. Bretell says it is Merlin who is in his chamber.

resten, for ther-to hadde thei nede and gret myster, for many were they hurte; and the kynges yede to here euesonge, and than thei yede to soper, and after begonne the carolles and to speke of the turnemente, and asked oon of a-nother, how hem semed of whom that hadde don beste. And thei seide that the kyng ban hadde xv knyghtes that hadde don alther beste more than eny other, and on that other part were viij that hadde don merveilles in armes, and gretly hadde they traueylled and peyned, and moche were thei to a-lowe. Thus heilde they her tales longe, and alwey they yaf the loos and the pris to kay, the stiward, and to Lucas, the boteller, and to Gifflet, the sone of do. These were the thre that beste hadde don, and ofte tymes Iusted, and in euery nede were redy.

Whan the tables were vp, arisen the thre kynges and the Archebisshop and Antor, and Guynebaus, that was brother to the two kynges. Than thei yede into a chamber that was be-syde the halle, towarde the gardyn of the river of temse, \*and with hem yede tweyne that ne ought not to be for-yeten, that was Vlfin and Bretell, and so thei pleide and spake to-geder of many thinges. Than be-heilde Vlfin and Bretell, and than he gan to laugh, for he be-thought hym on the wordes that Merlin hadde hym tolde, whan they were gon on his message, how thei were assailed in the deserte of vij knyghtes, and how they dide hem deliuers. Than the kyng cleped hem bothe, and comaunded hem, be the feith that thei hym oughten, that thei sholde hym telle all the trouthe, how thei hadde spedde in their message. Whan thei herde the kyng thus speke, that oon loked on the tother and be-gonne to smyle, and Bretell ansuerde the kyng, that thought well he it knewe thourgh Merlin, and seide, "Sir, wherto sholde we telle you oure spede in oure Iourney, for as wele ye do it knowe as we oure self, thourgh hym that hath it tolde, and therfore it were but speche loste." Than seide the kyng Ban, "Who is that, that hath hym this tolde?" "Certein, sir, the wisest man of the worlde." "And where is he?" quod Ban, "and what is name?" "Sir," quod Bretell, "it is Merlin, and he resteth in my chamber here-ynne, and by his counseile

hath my lorde sente after yow." "Sir," quod kyng Ban, "lete hym come hider, for we haue moche disired hym for to see, for the merveilles that we haue herde of hym spoken." And Arthur seide that so wolde he do with gode will. And than he sente Vlfin for hym, and ther-with a-noon entred Merlin in to the chamber agein Vlfin, and seide, "Returne," and so thei wente be-fore the kyng, and asked wherefore he hadde sente hym to seche. And the kyng ban blissed hym for the merveile that he hadde, how he myght knowe these thingis, and Merlin seide, "Ther-of no forse, for here-after ye shull wite I-nough."

Ban asks to see him.

Arthursends Vlfin for him,

and he comes before the king.

Ban asks Merlin how he knows these things.

Then he be-gan to telle a party of his lif, and than com forth Guynebaude, the clerke, and opposed hym of dyuerse thynges, for he was a profounde clerke. And Merlyn hym answerde to alle the questiouns that he asked the very trouthe as it was, and so indured longe the disputacion be-twene hem tweyne; and at laste Merlin seide that all for nought he traueylede, "for," quod he, "the more thow sechest the more shalt thow fynde."

Merlin tells a part of his life. Guynebaude asks him questions, which Merlin answers with truth.

And than seide Merlin to hem that were a-boute hym, that he hadde neuer founde no clerke that euer hadde spoke to hym of so high clergie, ne not blase, that was so holy a man, ne cowde not so moche enquire. Wher-to sholde I make yow longe tale. But longe they spake to-geder, so that the toon was well a-queynted with that other, and well thei loved to-geder. And whan the disputaciouns were don, Merlin com to the two kynges that were his brethern, and seide, "Lordynges, ye be worthi men and of high renoun, and also ye beth right feith-full and trewe; and lo! here the kyng Arthur, that ought to be youre lorde, and of hym sholde ye holde youre londes and do hym homage; and he ought to helpe yow and to socoure agein alle men, yef ye haue nede." And thei seide, "Merlin, now telle vs how he was chosen to be kyng, and wherfore, and yef Antor knowe whether he be the sone of Vterpendragon." And Merlin seide, "Ye, with-oute faile." Than he tolde hem \*alle the thinges like as was be-falle, so that the archebisshop and Vlfin it recorded.

Merlin says he has never found a clerk who "spoke to him of so high clergie."

When the disputations were done, Merlin speaks to the two kings, and tells them that Arthur ought to be their lord, and he ought to help them. The kings ask if Arthur is the son of Uterpendragon.

\*[Fol. 47a.]

"Merlin," quod the kyng ban, "we will that thow make vs sure of oon thinge that we shall aske, for so moche

King Ban asks Merlin to make them

sure of one  
thing that  
they will ask.

Merlin agrees  
to be sworn.

They go to  
bed.  
The three  
kings and the  
archbishop  
sleep in one  
chamber.  
Merlin  
teaches Guy-  
nebaud many  
things.

we knowe in yow, that ye will not to vs sey no lesynge for all the londe that longeth to the crowne." "A ha," quod Merlin, "ye desire to haue me sworn that it be trewe that I sey." And thei be-gonne to laugh, and seide that ther uas noon so wise as was he in no reame. And Merlin seide, "I graunte youre requeste and youre desire," and so thei toke respite till on the morn. Thus ended theire parlament, and departed and yede to bedde, and the thre kynges and the archebisshop lay in oon chamber, for they wolde not departe on sondre. And moche Guynebaude a-queynted hym with Merlin, that taught hym many grete maistres and many feire pleyes; and Guynebaude well hem vnderstode, as he that was wise and a grete clerke, so that he wrought somme of the craftes ofte in the bloy Breteyne, that longe tyme after endured, and as it shall here-after reherse.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE BATTLE BETWEEN ARTHUR AND THE REBEL KINGS AT BREDIGAN.

Merlin a-  
wakes the  
kings,

who clothe  
themselves  
and go to the  
minster.  
The arch-  
bishop sings  
the mass.  
Merlin  
swears that  
Arthur is the  
son of Uter-  
pendragon.  
Ulin swears  
that what  
Merlin has  
said is true.

The kings do  
homage to  
Arthur.

When these thre kynges weren a-bedde and at her ese that nyght, the storye seith that they lay till on the morn, that thei ronge to messe right erly, for it was a litill a-fore halow-messe. Than com Merlin and a-woke hem, and opened the two windowes towarde the gardyn, for he wolde that thei hadde lyght ther-ynne, and they hem clothed and a-rayed and yede to the mynster, and the archebisshop sange the messe; and than Merlin dide swere be-fore the kynges that Arthur was the sone of Vter-pendragon, and that he was be-geten on the quene Ygerne that nyght that the Duke was slayn, and that he was the moste rightfull heire that the londe myght holde. After that swore Ulin that so god hym helpe and alle seyntes, that it was trewe all as Merlin hadde rehersed. When the two kynges hadde take the oth of these two, a-noon thei dide to kynge Arthur their homage full debonerly as was right, and the kynge he receyved with gode herte and sympilliche with wepyng, and than thei kiste with



gode herte for grete love, and than was the ioye more than before; and than thei yede vp in to the halle to mete, and thei were served as high men ought to be, and after mete Arthur and Merlin wente to-geder to counseile, and the two kynges that were brethern, and Vlfin and Bretell and kay the stywarde. Thanne seide Merlyn, "Feire lordynges, ye be alle worthy men and trewe, and I knowe yow alle as wele or beter than ye do youreself; and lo! here youre lorde the kynge Arthur, þat is right a worthi man, and a gode knyght shall he be of his honde; and ye knowe well that grete wronge that is do to hym by his barouns of his londe, that will not resceyve hym for theire lorde, ne do to hym homage as thei ought to do of right, but besy hem to greve hym with all her power, and therefore I pray yow do as I shall yow counsell, and knowe it well that it shall be the beste counseile that I may yow yeve." \*And they seide thei wolde do like as he wolde devise, and he thanked debonerly. And than he seide, "Lordinges, se here the kynge that hath no wif, and I knowe a mayden that is kynges doughter and quenes, and of right high lynage, and also she is right feire, and of grete valoure, that no lady ne may haue more, and that is the doughter of kynge Leodegan, of Carmelide, that is now an olde man and hath no mo children but this doughter, whos name is Gonnore, to whom the londe moste falle after his discesse; and he hath grete werre a-gein the kynge Rion, that is of the lynage of Geauntes, and he is right riche and right puyssant, and yef it happe that he conquere the reame of Carmelide, that marcheth to the reame of Logres, that is Arthures, wite it well that Arthur ne shall not longe kepe his londe in pees, and alle the dayes of his lif he shall have werre on alle partees; and ne were the knyghtes of the rounde table, that deffende the reame of kynge Leodegan a-gein the Geauntes, thei sholde haue all his londe wasted and distroied, and therfore I counseile yow that ye take with yow certein of youre peple, and go with Arthur, and a-bide with the kynge Leodegan a yere or two, till that ye be with hym well a-queynted, and ye shull but litill while be ther, but he shall love yow better than theym that with him now ther; and knowe it wele that he

The joy is greater than before.

Merlin and the others go to counsel.

Merlin prays the two kynges to do as he counsels them.

\*[Fol. 47b.]

They say they will, and he thanks them.

Merlin says that Arthur has no wife; but there is a right fair lady, named Gonnore, whois daughter to king Leodegan, of Carmelide. Leodegan has great war with king Rion.

Merlin counsels that they go and abide with Leodegan for a year or two,

who will  
proffer Ar-  
thur his  
daughter for  
a wife.

shall proffer Arthur his doughter to be his wif, and ther-by shall he haue his reame all quyte. Ne neuer after that the Geauntes knowe, that he hath her wedded shull they not be so hardy to a-byde in the contre, ne nygh it by a Iourney."

Ban asks  
Merlin how  
it will be  
with their  
own lands if  
they do this.

Than ansuerde kynge Ban to Merlyn and seide, "Dere frende, yef we go in to straunge londe, and leue our londes in this manere as thei be, how shall ther-of falle, for we haue an euell and fell nyghbour that vpon vs werre, and brenneth oure townes and castelles? Ne this londe also is no-thinge sure, ffor the barouns that sholde be the kynges frendes and his liege men, thei do vpon hym werren, therfore it is grete pereyle to leue his owne reame for to deffende a-nother mannes." "Ha, sir," quod

Merlin says  
that what  
they lose on  
one side they  
will win  
double on the  
other.

Merlin, "ye sey I-nough after youre in-tencion; but it is grete nede a man to go bak to recouer the better his leep, for wite it well, for a peny that ye lese on this side, ye shall wyne tweyn on that side; ffor on this party shall ye neyther lese Castell ne Citee, and on that other side ther shall ye wyne an hool reame, that euer after shall deffende this reame." "I wote neuer," quod kynge

Ban says  
Merlin is  
wiser than  
all of them,  
and he will  
do as he  
counsels  
him.

Ban, "what I shall sey, for ye beth more wyser than we alle, and a-gein me I will do that ye counseile, seth it is so as ye haue seide ther is no more, but lete vs gon, and therfore devise ye whan we shull meue, and ther-to lete eche of vs make hym

\*[Fol. 48a.]

Merlin says  
they shall  
not move till  
Lent, for  
there will be  
a great bat-  
tle in this  
country.  
The forces  
are to be  
lodged in the  
forest of  
Bredigan.  
Ban asks if  
he can get  
succour from  
his country  
in time.  
Merlin says  
he will go  
there quicker  
than any  
messenger.  
The battle  
will be at  
Candilmas.

redy." "All be-\*tyme," seide Merlin, "for ye ne shall not meue before lenton, for er that tyme moste ye do a grete bataile in this contree agein the barouns, that assemble and gedere as moche peple as they may haue, and therfore we shull assemble as many as we may gete in the pryviest wise that we can, and lete hem be loigged in a launde that is in the forest of Bredigan, and ne doute not ther-of but that ye shall do hem more damage than they shall do to yow." "Merlin," seide the kynge Ban, "yef I and my brother sende for socour in to oure contree, may they come be-tyme?" "Ye, trewly," quod Merlin. "Than shall I sende thider?" quod Ban. "Certes," quod Merlin, "I shall go and do that is ther-to nede, and sonner shall I be ther than eny mes-sager that ye can sende; but thei be-houe to haste, for the bataile shall be at Candilmesse, in the medowes of Bredigan, and ther-

fore youre peple moste ryde nyght and day for to haste hem ; and knowe it verily that I shall be at Gannes be to-morowe at euen." And whan they herde that they merveiled gretly, and than thei hym clipt and made grete ioye. Than Merlyn cleped Arthur, and seide, "Sir, I go now on this message, for it is no tyme lenger to tarye. Now, sende and assemble knyghtes, and seriauntes, and arblasters, as many as y[e] may gete, and ordeyne that they be sente grete plente of vitaille in to the launde that I haue nempned, that ye may departe a-monge the peple, for it shall be grete nede, and make eche man to take vitaille for xv dayes. After that they be loigged, as mele and salteflyssh withoute more ; and the gouernours to departe hem shall be Lucas, the boteller, and Gifflet, and Vlfin, and Bretell ; and ye, sir," quod he to the kynge Ban, "yeve me youre ryng, that I may it take to Leonces de paerne, youre cosin, be the token that he telle me that I shall sey to yow."

He will be at Gannes by to-morrow evening. Merlin tells Arthur that he shall go at once, and directs him to assemble his knights.

Each man to take victuals for fifteen days. The governors, to divide them, to be Lucas, Gifflet, Vlfin and Bretell. Merlin asks Ban for the ring to take to Leonces de Paerne.

Whan the two brethern herde how Merlin spake they hadde grete merveile, and<sup>1</sup> were a-bassht, for thei wende that no creature lyvinge hadde knowen of that he seide ; for he knewe alle thynges at o[on] worde as of soche thynges as hym liste to knowe, were thei neuer so prevy. And thei seide, "Seth it is so, we shall delyuer yow the ryng, and wite ye well that we love yow, and truste more than all the worlde." "Be my feith," quod Merlyn, "ye sey as wise men at this worde, and thus moche shull ye wynne ther-by, that ye shall se oon day how moche that I do yow love." With that the kynge toke hym the ryng, and Merlyn it toke and comaunded hem to god, and yede thider as I haue yow tolde, and com be Blase, and tolde hym alle these thynges, that nought he lefte vn-seide ; and also tolde hym how he yede on message in to litill Bretein. And he wrote in his boke that Merlin hym tolde, and by his writynge haue we yet the knowinge ther-of. With that departed Merlin fro blase, that lenger ne wolde not tarie, but dide his message well and feire, ffor on the morowe by pryme he come to Citee of Gannes,

The two brethren marvel greatly, for they thought no one knew of it.

They tell him that they trust him.

The king gives the ring to Merlin,

who goes to Blase, and tells him all these things. Blase writes them in his book.

On the morrow Merlin comes to

<sup>1</sup> The word "and" is repeated in the MS.

Gannes, and  
shows Leon-  
ces the ring,

\*[Fol. 48b.]

who sends  
out and ga-  
thers much  
people to-  
gether before  
Benoyk.

They set  
keepers in  
the two  
cities.

They set  
Lambeges in  
the fortress  
of Gannes,

Rahier in the  
fortress of  
Benoyk,

and Bawde-  
wyn in the  
fortress of  
Trebes,  
where were  
the two  
queens.  
At Mouloir  
they left  
Placidas.

Merlin con-  
ducts the  
hosts safely by  
night to the  
sea, when  
they enter  
the ships.

Arthur sum-  
mons his  
friends in the  
priviest way  
that he can.  
More people  
come to him  
than he ex-  
pects.

There are ten  
thousand  
horsemen.  
All the car-  
riage of the  
land bring  
victuals.

The land of  
Bredigan is a  
wild place.

and tolde to Leonces that the two bretheren hym sente, and shewed hym the rynge that was the prevy token be-twene hym and the \*kyng, and Leonces a-noon yaf credence to all that Merlin seide. Than a-noon he sente oute and purchased, and gedered so moche peple, that thei were well x<sup>m</sup>, alle on horse bakke, armed, be-fore the Citee of Benoyk, viij dayes be-fore yooles. Than they sette kepers in the two Citees that were the two bretheren, soche as thei wiste was myster, and oon of the kepers was Lambeges, that was right a trewe knyght, and a gode man of his body, and hym thei sette in the forteresse of Gannes, and Pharien, his vncle, praide hym to do well, and he seide so he wolde to his power. And in the forteresse of benoyk sette they Rahier de haut mur, that was right a gode knyght and yonge at prynde barbe; and in the forteresse of Trebes thei lefte Bawdewyn, the sone of Grassien, that was the godsone of kyng Ban. And ther-ynne were the two susters lefte that were quenes, for that was the beste Castell, and the stre[n]gest of bothe reames. At Mouloir, a stronge castell of kyng Boors, thei lefte Placidas, that was a gode knyght and a trewe. Whan thei hadde thus garnysshed all the Contree, thei toke their wey be nyght, for the moone shone clere. And Merlin condited the hoste oute fro euyll passages, and so thei traueyled till thei come to the see and entred in to shippes. On the tother side Arthur a-raied hym in the beste wise that he myght, as Merlyn hadde hym taught, for he sente and somowne<sup>d</sup> the previest wise he cowde, to alle tho that he knewe were his frēdes, and so com grete plente of peple, more than he wende; and some come thider with gode will for the grete yeftes that he yaf, and some for to haue of hym a-queyntance for the grete bounte that thei hadde herde of hym speke. And whan thei were assembled, thei were well x<sup>m</sup> on horsbak armed, for fotemen wolde thei noon lede. And on the tother side come all the cariage of the londe, that brought vitaille as Merlin hadde hem comaunded. And the kyng made the hoste to be ledde, in the stillest wise that he myght, in to the launde of bredigan, for it was oon of the wildeste places of that oon knewe, ffor whan thei were ther loigged, thei were, as who seith, loste. And the kyng dide oon thyng that Merlin

hilde grete wisdom, ffor as soone as the cariage and vitaille was ledde in to that place where thei were loigged, he sette in euery wey gode keepers thourgh the londe, that noon ne sholde passe that ne were take and brought be-fore hym, for that he wolde noon espye sholde entre in to his londe, for to discure to his enmys, and made defende oute thourgh his londe, that who ne heilde of the kynge Arthur ne ride not thourgh his londe be-fore that Candelmasse were passed, and yef eny ther were that passed, he hilde hem to wite that he sholde other lese his lif or membre yef he myght be taken, ffor so hadde the kynge comaunded; and thei heilde hem so in pees that thei com not ther, and ther-of merueiled the mene people what it myght mene. And thus was the chyuaachie so prively kept, that noon wiste where thei be come, saf only thei of the kynges counseile. But now stenteth the tale of hem, and returneth to speke of the vij kynges that were discourntfited at Clarion, and all her companye, as ye haue herde.

Now, seith the story, that sorowfull and full of hevynesse were the vij kynges, whan thei were discourntfited ther as thei loste all here harneyse of hirs and of \*her mayne. Than thei swore and assured to-geder that neuer shulde thei be gladd till thei were avenged of kynge Arthur and vpon his enchauntour, by whom thei hadde all that losse, yef thei in eny wise myght hym  
 this wise yede the vij kynges, mat and sorowfull for thire discourntfiture wherefore thei sholde be the werse all hir lyf tyme, and somme of hem were caried in horse lyters that myght not suffre to ryde, and so thei traueyled smale iournes, till thei come in to theire londes, and sojourned till thei were hool of her woundes. And at the monthes ende thei toke a parlement in a contree that is be-twene the reame of Gorre and Scotlonde, and the parlement was this: that eche of hem sholde sende after all his kyn and frendes, and so go vpon the kynge Arthur and be-reve hym his londe, and so exile hym fro all the contree; and so thei sette day to assemble at Bredigan, in the medowes. Thus thei departed, and sente for helpe bothe fer and nygh; and com hem to helpe the Duke Escam, of Cambenyk, with v<sup>ml</sup> men of armes,

Arthur sets keepers in the way that none should pass.

No one who does not hold of king Arthur is to ride through his land till after Candle-mass.

The poor people marvel what it may mean.

The seven kings are sorowful after their discourntfiture.  
 \*[Fol. 49a.]

They swear to be avenged of Arthur and his enchanter.

They travel by small iournes to their own land. They hold a parliament in a country between Gorre and Scotland. They agree to gather together their friends and assemble on a set day at Bredigan. Duke Escam comes to help them,

also king  
Tramelmens,  
king Clarion,

king Loth,  
king Carados,  
king Ventres,  
king Urien,  
and king  
Ydiers.

They send  
spies through  
the land,

but Arthur's  
keepers take  
them, and  
they are all  
put in pri-  
son.  
The kings  
meet under  
the castle of  
Bredigan.

They send  
out their  
foragers, but  
find little to  
take.

They destroy  
the land with  
fire, and have  
victuals  
brought to  
the host from  
their own  
land.

Merlin and  
his com-  
panions sail  
to Britain.

The reason  
Bloy Bre-  
tagne is so  
called.

\*[Fol. 49b.]  
After the de-  
struction of  
Troy two ba-  
rons arrived  
in this coun-  
try: one of

and also come the kynge Tramelmens, of Northwales, with vij<sup>M</sup> men, and the kynge Clarion with iij<sup>M</sup> men, and the [kynge] with the hundred knyghtes, that was a noble knyght and an hardy, come with iij<sup>M</sup> men, and also com the kynge Loth, of Orcanye, and Leonoyes, with vij<sup>M</sup> men, and the kynge Carados, of Strangore, com with vij<sup>M</sup> men, and also the kynge Ventres, of Garlot, com with vij<sup>M</sup> men, and the kynge Vrien, of Gorre, com with vij<sup>M</sup> Men, and also come the kynge Ydiers, of Cornewaile, with vij<sup>M</sup> men; and so thei rode forth smale iournes, as thei that wende well to distroye the contree. Than thei sente their espyes thourghoute the londe, for to knowe the rule of kynge Arthur; but the kepers that were sette in the contrey a-noon token hem alle, and sente hem to kynge Arthur, and were sette in prison that thei cowde heir tydynges. And these kynges spedde forth her iourney till thei mette, and were logged vnder the Castell of bredigan, and were mery and gladde, for thei wende well that they hadde all wonne. Thei sente theire forrears through the contrey, but litill thei fonde to take, ffor all was ledde in to Castelles and stronge townes, and this was do be the counseile of kynge ban and the kynge Broos, his brother, that were full wise knyghtes. And whan thei saugh that all was gon, and that the peple of the contrei hadde this don, thei sette all on fier and on flame, and distroied the londe all that thei myght, and made vitaille be brought to the oste oute of her owne londes; and when thei were alle to-geder thei were acompted lx<sup>M</sup>. But now cesseth the tale to speke of hem, and speketh of Merlin, and of the socour that he bringeth oute of the litill Breteyne, as ye haue herde be-fore.

Now, seith the boke, that so Merlin, and Leonces, and Pharien, and Antoynes, the stiwarde of Benoyk, com to the rochell, and entred in to the shippes, and so thei sailed till thei com to the bloy bretagne, and it is reson that the boke do yow to vndirstonde whi it is so cleped. This is the trouthe: after that the distruxion of troye, it \*fill so that two barouns departed and fledde the contrey, and oute of the londe, for doute of the Grekes. Of these two barouns that fledde the londe come grete plente of peple; and the name of that oon was Brutus, whiche dide a-ryve in

this contrey, and dide do make a Citee, that in his lyve was cleped the newe troye, for that he was come oute of troye, and the londe was cleped in worship of his name Bretaine, for that his name was Brutus; and longe tyme after the dethe of this Brutus com a-nothir kynge in to this londe, that hight Logryns. This Logryn a-mended gretly the Citee, and made towres and stronge walles enbateiled, and whan he hadde thus ame[n]ded it he chaunged the name and cleped it Logres, in breteigne, for that his name was Logryn, and this name dured in to the deth of kynge Arthur; but after his deth, and the deth of his barouns, that thourgh Mordred and Agraunayn eche slow other on the playn of Salisberi, as the boke shall reherse her-after, the deth of launcelot, that was the sone of kynge Ban, of benoyk. And so it fill after that ther was a grete pestelence and slaughter of barouns and of the mene peple, and for that the losse was so grete, the mene peple cleped it the bloy bretaine, ffor that her hertes and her thoughtes were so bloy and so blake for theire frendes, that thei hade so loste for myschaunce of synne.

Now haue ye herde the cause why this londe was cleped the bloy bretaine. The tother baron that fledde oute of troye was cleped Corneus. This Corneus was of the lynage of Geauntes, and in that contree that marched to bretaine, and he was right a mervilouse knyght, and was moche and stronge, and made townes and Castelles, and men cleped the contrey Corne-waile in bretaine, ne neuer after yet this name ne left. And of hym come the Geauntes, as seith the frenshe book, that moche harme haue don to the bretouns, wherof this book shall reherse yow here-after, and also of the merveiles that be-fill in their tyme. But now returneth the tale to Merlin, that cometh in the see, and with hym bryngeth the socour and helpe to kynge Arthur oute of the litill breteigne.

Now seith the boke that whan Merlin and his companye were arived in the grete breteigne, Merlin comaunded that all the harneise and armoure sholde be trussed in males and cloth sakkes, and in other cariage, ffor he wolde not that they sholde not loigge ne tarye on the wey, but that thei sholde

them was named Brutus. They built a city, called New Troy, and the land was called Bretaine, after Brutus, another king, named Logrin, amended the city, and called it Logres,

which name lasted till after the death of Arthur,

when there was a great pestilence and slaughter of barons and mean people, and it was called 'Bloy Bretaine.'

The other baron that fled out of Troy was Corneus, of the lineage of the giants.

He made towns and castles, and called the country Cornwall. From him came the giants that did much harm to the Britons.

When Merlin and his company arrive in Great Britain, he commands them to truss up the harness and ar-

mour, for  
they must  
not tarry on  
the way.

On the fifth  
day they ar-  
rive in the  
forest of Bre-  
digan, where  
they find Ar-  
thur's host.

They rest  
eight days.

\*[Fol. 50a.]  
Merlin comes  
to the war-  
dens, and tells  
them he is  
going to fetch  
the three  
kings.

He tells them  
not to let any  
one issue out  
of the host,  
because of  
Arthur's ene-  
mies, who are  
accounted to  
be forty thou-  
sand horse-  
men.

Ulfins says an-  
other ought  
to go with  
the message,  
but Merlin  
says he can  
bring them  
in without  
being seen.

He departs  
suddenly.

trauaile day and nyght till thei come in to the place where Merlin wolde hem loigge with the meyne of kynge Arthur.

And thei dide his comaundement. And so thei spedde her iourneyes that the fifte day thei come in to the forest of bredigan, where thei fonde the hoste of kynge Arthur. And bothe hostes made to-geder grete ioye, as soone as eyder of hem myght sen other. Than thei loigged in tentes and pavilouns, and restede hem so viij dayes hool, and than was the vitaille departed as Merlin hadde devised. And than come Merlin to

\*the wardeyns of the hoste, and seide, "I go to fecche the thre kynges, for thei shull do beste at this nede than eny other." And thei seide to Merlin in game, "Loke ye be-war of the<sup>1</sup> tother parti, for we here sey that thei do manace yow sore." "I knowe that well," quod Merlin, "but thei shall neuer haue ouer me no power; and I do yow to wete that thei haue reson to hate me, for thei haue no werse enmy, ne noon that may do hem so grete damage as I shall do, as longe as thei be enmyes to the kynge Arthur. But I haue it not yet be-gonne; but be well ware that noon isse oute of this hoste, ffor than the harme myght neuer be restored, ffor alle Arthurs enmyes ben loigged here faste by, vndir the castell of bredigan. And thei be acompted xl<sup>mi</sup> wele horsed men. And of oure party we be but xxv<sup>mi</sup>, and therefore we moste be wisely gouerned, or elles we sholde alle lese."

"Sir," quod Vlfyn, "another ought rather to go on this massage than ye." "Nay," quod Merlin, "I can better lede hem in safte than eny other, so that thei shall not be seyn ne knowe of no man." "Now goth, a godes name," seide the barouns, "and as hastely as ye may come to vs a-geyn." And Merlin departed a-noon fro hem so sodenly, that thei knewe not where he was be-come. And than thei blissid hem for the grete merveyle that thei hadde ther-of. And than thei departed, and yede a-boute in the hoste and sette soche gouernaunce that noon was so hardy to meue ne to sette a fote oute of the hoste, ne of her loiggyng. And thus thei a-bode iiij dayes that thei ne herde

<sup>1</sup> The words "of the" are repeated in the MS.



no tydinges of the thre kynges ne of Merlin. And, as the boke seith, the same nyght that Merlin departed fro the hoste, he come to logres be-fore euesonge, where as he fonde the thre kynges full pensif and hevy, for the contrey that was so wastid and distroyed. Than come Merlin so sodenly a-monge hem that thei wiste not fro whens he com. And a-noon thei hym clipt and made grete ioye, and after thei asked hym how he hadde spedde seth that he fro hem departed; and he seide right wele, and badde hem make redy to go in to the oste, ffor ther-after the barouns dide a-bide.

The same night he comes to Logres.

He comes so suddenly to the kings that they know not from whence he came. He bids them make ready to return with him to the host.

Ban asks if his succour has come.

Merlin says there are twenty-five thousand horsemen on Arthur's side, but there are ten kings and a duke on the other side, and fifty thousand horsemen; and they are good knights. But he hopes

[Fol. 506.] with the help of God to do much through his wit. He tells them that there will be a great battle, in which only twenty-four of Arthur's party will be killed, but thousands on the other side. He tells them to get ready. They make ready and go to supper. The king asks Merlin if they should arm themselves.

“How, sir,” quod kynge ban, “is oure socour than I-come.” “Ye,” quod Merlin, “thei be loigged by Arthurs oste in the myddel of the launde, in the foreste of bredigan; and thei be xv<sup>m</sup> horse-men, and also of Arthurs x<sup>m</sup>. But on that other party is moche peple, for ther be x kynges crowned and a Duke, and thei haue in their companye l<sup>m</sup> horsemen.” “Now god helpe vs,” quod Arthur, “for this is a grete peple.” “Ye,” quod Merlin, “yet is ther more with this myschef than all this, ffor thei be gode knyghtes and of high prowesse; but be the feith that I owe to kynge Arthur, that is my lorde, I hope, with the helpe of god to do so moche thourgh the \*witte that he hath me sente, that in euyll tyme come thei ther, for thei shall haue so moche to done that thei shall not a-gein yow endure. But ther shall be a bateile, and that shall be grete, and moche slaughter ther shall be of men and horse; but on owre partye shull not be deed above xxiiij, but on their syde shall be deed thowsandes, and that shall ye se. And therefore a-noon aray yow, for after soper we will ride. And also do lede with yow vitaille for iiij dayes, for it is not to a-bide lenger.” And whan that thei vndirstode that Merlin hadde seide, a-noon thei made redy and araide hem of alle thynges that was nedefull, and than yede to soper at gode leyser. And than the kynge asked Merlin yef thei sholde hem arme. And he seide, “Nay,” for it sholde do hem to moche gref, ne thei sholde haue no drede of no man lyvinge be that wey as he wolde hem lede.

Whan thei hadde souped thei cloded hem warme as thei myght, for the froste was grete, and the mone shone

When they have supped they pass on

their journey.

Antor rides upon a great steed.

Merlin guides them till they come to a forest, where they alight to eat and drink. Merlin speaks to Arthur,

and advises him to give liberally, so that he may get the hearts of his people.

He tells him that there is a great treasure in this place, and that he must take good heed of this plot of ground.

He shews him a well, and makes a sign there.

They ride day and night till they come to the forest of Bredigan.

The weather is very cold.  
\* [Fol. 51a.]

clere; and they passed on her iourney. And ne were no mo than xxv<sup>MI</sup> what oon and other. Whan thei were alle on horse bakke, Merlín rode be-fore, and the thre kynges and Antor, that satte vpon a grete stede, whiche the kynge made hym on to ryde, to be with hem in company; but he wolde haue abiden with gode chere yef the kynge wolde. In this maner thei rode all nyght; and Merlin was Guyde till thei com in a grete foreste, where thei a-lighte till here mete was made redy. Than thei ete and dronke of soche as thei hadde brought with hem, for thei hadde I-nough. And whan thei hadden ete, Merlin [yede] to the thre kynges in counseile, and seide, "Sir," quod he to kynge Arthur, "wote ye what I shall sey: ye be a yonge man, and haue a grete reame to maynteyne, and the barouns ne deyne not to yow obbeie; and also the mene peple ne knowe yow but litill ne were the great yestes that ye have yoven. And, therfore, I say yef euer ye haue be large of yestes here be-fore, loke now that ye be larger hens-forth, ffor ye may not so wele gete the hertes of youre peple as for to be fre and gentill in yevinge; and ye shull haue I-nough whereof, and I will telle yow how."

"I do yow to wite that in this grounde, ther we be now, is the grettest tresour that may be founde in eny place; but ye shall not take it till ye be repeed fro the bateile, for ye shall haue I-nough of other thinges to departe. And, loke ye, take gode hede of this plotte of grounde that ye now sitte on, whan that ye be agein repeed." Than he shewde hem a welle, and made ther a signe. And the kynges were gretly a-merveiled of that he hadde seide. And whan thei hadde longe spoke togeder thei lepe to horse, and rode day and nyght till thei come in to the hoste, in the foreste of bredigan. And ther thei pight the kynges teynte, by the feirest welle and the moste clere that thei hadde seen. And it yaf so gret foyson of water that the brooke ran down the launde, that was right feire and del[c]ctable. And the weder was right colde, for, as the boke seith, it was in the moneth of Janever, viij dayes before \*Candelmesse. And whan thei were loiged thei rested, and right her armours, and sojourned so two dayes hool. Than com Merlin

to hem, and seide that "Now fro hens-forth may we go vpon youre enmyes, and ther-fore devise now who shall haue the vaunt garde, ffor ye shull go in soche manere that thei shall not knowe till ye be vpon hem, and that shall be two oures be-fore day erly; ffor and thei a-perceyve yow thei be so moche peple that ye may not agein hem endure. And haue ye no drede, for ye shall haue the victorye." Than thei hem armed, and a-raide in the beste manere, and devised her batailes, and deliuered to kay the kynges baners, for to bere, that condited the firste bateile. And with him was Giffet and Lucas the boteller, and marke de la roche, and Aguyas li blois, and drias de la forest sauage, and belias the amerouse, and flaundrins le bret. These viij knyghtes were in the firste sheltron, and were iiij<sup>MI</sup> horsemen; the secunde ledde Bretell, that was of grete bounte and a trewe knyght, and a sure of his honde, and he hadde iij<sup>MI</sup> wele horsed. The thirde he delyuered to Vlfin, that moche knewe of werre, and was a full noble knyght. In this warde<sup>1</sup> was kyng Arthur, and iiij<sup>MI</sup> of gode men that neuer wolde faile their lorde for no drede of deth, and eueriche of these wardes drough by hym self a-sonder like as was devised. And so rode forth a softre pas kepyng clos, as Merlin dide hem gyyde, whiche rode before vpon a grete courser. After that the kyng Ban devised and ordeyned his peple and his brothers, and delyuered the firste warde to Pharien for to lede, and also to bere the ensigne of kyng Boors, as he that was a noble knyght and wele a-vised, and with hym was Moret de la veye, and ladunas, and Pales de trebes, and grassiens li bloys, and blioberis and meliadus the blake, and in her company iiij<sup>MI</sup> horsmen. The secunde warde of kyng ban ledde leonce of Paerne, that was a noble knyght and an hardy, and in his company iiij<sup>MI</sup> wele arayed. The thirde warde lede the kyng Boors of Gannes, that full wele cowde hem gyyde, and were in his company iiij<sup>MI</sup> men wele horsed. The forthe bataile ledde the kyng Ban of Benoyk, whiche was the beste knyght of alle other that was in the hoste. And he

Merlin asks who shall be the vanguard.

Arthur's friends shall have the victory. They arm themselves. Kay bears the king's banner. With him are Giffet, Lucas, and others.

Bretell leads the second division.

Ulfin leads the third division,

in which was king Arthur.

Merlin rides before on a great courser, to guide them.

Pharien bears the ensigne of king Boors.

Leonce leads king Ban's second division. King Boors leads the third,

and king Ban the fourth battalion.

<sup>1</sup> The word "warde" is repeated in the MS.

Aliaume  
bears Ban's  
sign.

They all ride  
forth by  
moonlight.

The book re-  
turns to tell  
of the Danes.

The kings  
Brangore,  
Margans, and  
Hardoga-  
bran,

summon  
their people  
from far and  
near,  
\*[Fol. 51b.]

and enter  
into the land,  
and destroy  
the country.

They were  
long in Corn-  
wall, till  
Arthur  
chased them  
out.

The book re-  
turns to Ar-  
thur.

The eleven  
kings set no  
watch.

They all sleep  
in the tent  
of the king  
called 'Roy  
de Cent Chi-  
ualiers.'

delyuered his signe to Aliaume his stiwarde for to bere, that was a gode knyght, and in his company iiij<sup>M</sup> of gode men, that for no fer of deth wolde not faile their lorde. And whan they were all a-raide and discevered a-sonder, thei rode forth be the mone light that was full bright shynyng. Now cesseth the tale to speke of hem at this tyme, and returne to telle of the Danes, and of the kynges that marcheden to the londe a-boute, that become to werre vpon the kynge Arthur.

**N**ow, seith the boke, that whan the kynge Brangore and the kynge Margans, and the kynge hardogabran, that was newewe to the kynge Amynadus, that was kynge of the Danes, that was oncle to Aungier, the danoyes that Arthurs fader dide slee like as ye haue herde here fore whan thei herde sey how these vij barouns dide werre vpon kynge Arthur. Than thei dide somown her peple fer and nygh, till \*thei were xxx<sup>ti</sup> M<sup>i</sup> of men on horse bakke with-out fotemen wherof was grete plente, and so thei entred in to the londe, and toke many prayes and brent townes and vilages and distroyed all the contrees as thei passeden, and slow peple grete plente, and sette a sege be-fore a castell that was called Vandelers, in cornewaile, and ther thei were longe tyme, that neuer ne myght be put oute, for all the power that the xj kynges hadden, till that the kynge Arthur chased hem oute after that his barouns were acorded with hym. But now of hem no more speketh the boke at this tyme till the mater it asketh, but repaireth to kynge Arthur and to Merlin, and to kynge Ban, of Benoyk, and kynge boors, of Gannes, and telleth how thei were in-batailed a-gein the xj kynges that were be-fore the castell of bredigan.

**T**he boke seith that while kynge Arthur and kynge Ban, of benoyk, and kynge Boors, of Gannes, ordeyned her batailes in this wise, as ye haue herde; that nyght the xj kynges ne toke noon hede to sette no wacche in thayr hoste, but wente to their bedde, and slepte as thei that no-thinge knewe that her enmyes were so nygh, but oon feire fortune for thei hadde, that alle the xj kynges lay in the kynges teynte, that was cleped Roy de Cent Chiualiers, and thei ne wende not to haue no drede of

no man; and as thei thus were slepyng be-fill that kynge looth was in a ferfull dreme, ffor hym semed that he saugh so grete a wynde a-rise that it caste down howses and stepelis of chirches, and after that ther come a thounder so grete and merveilously sharpe, that hym thought all the worlde trembled for fere and drede, and after that com a water so sharply, that drof down the howsyng and a grete parte of the peple, and hym semed how hym self was in grete pereile to drowne; and as the kynge loth was in this affray, he dede a-wake, and hym blissed and was sore a-baissed of this dreme that he was in, and a-roos and a-pareiled hym, and yede to his felowes, and hem dide a-wake and tolde hem his a vision. And thei asked hym fro whiche part com the water, and he seide from the foreste com all the rage and the tempeste as hym semed. And thei seide thei knewe verily that thei sholde hastely haue bataile, and that merveillouse. And ther-with thei a-risen, and a-woke alle the knyghtes ther-ynne, and comaunded hem to serche all the contre environ, that thei were not supprised of no peple. And thei armed hem right wele, and lepte on ther horses, and rode serchyng the contrey. And the xj kynges hem armed and a-raide in the beste maner that thei cowden. And than Merlin be-gan to haste Arthurs peple, that well knewe the gouernaunce of the tother party, and thei com so faste on, that thei toke noon hede till thei were euen fallen on hem that the contrey serched. And whan thei saugh hem armed, thei hadde grete drede, and asked Merlin, that mette with hem formeste, what peple thei were, and Merlin seide \*it was the kynge Arthur that was come to chalange his londe a-gein alle hem that ther-with wolde be greved. Whan thei herde these wordes thei turned bakke, and smote the horse with spores, and whan thei come in to the hoste, thei cryde "Treson, treson. Now as armes lordes, gentill knyghtes, for ther was neuer so grete nede, for lo! here cometh Arthur euen at youre teyntes." And thei ronne to here armes, that yet were in her beddys, and hadde no leyser hem to clothe, and that was yet a faire happe for hem that her horses were redy sadellyd; but yet for all that thei myght hem hasten, thise other were vpon hem er thei myght

King Loth has a fearful dream.

He goes to his fellows, and awakes them, and tells his vision,

Theysaythey shall soon have battle.

They awake the knights, and command them to search the country round, that they may not be surprised.

Merlin hastens on Arthur's people.

They fall upon those who were sent to search the country.

\*[Fol. 52a.]

Merlin tells these scouts that they have come to challenge the land. The scouts return to the host, crying "Treason."

All run for their arms, which are in their beds.

Merlin sends  
them a wind  
and tempest,

which great-  
ly troubles  
them;  
and Arthur's  
people smite  
in among  
them.

The kings go  
out into the  
fields, and  
have a trum-  
pet blown, so  
that those  
who escape  
may know  
where to fly  
to.

They assem-  
ble by a river.

Twentythou-  
sand fly.

Ten thou-  
sand are left  
lying dead  
and wound-  
ed.

Merlin tells  
Arthur to go  
to the pas-  
sage at the  
ford, and  
fight with the  
twentythou-  
sand men.  
Kings Ban  
and Boors to  
go to the  
other side,  
and fall on  
them from  
the forest.

be half a-raied of her harneyse. And ther-with hem fill a grete encomberaunce, that Merlin sente hem soche a wynde and tempeste, that her tentes fill vpon their hedes, and a-monge hem was soche a truble that vn-ethe myght eny of hem se other ne heren. And that was a thyng that gretly hem distrubled in her armyng, and ther-ynne thei caught grete damage, ffor Arthurs peple smote in a-monge hem, and ouerthrewe and slowgh all that thei myght a-reche. But the xj kynges were departed and deseuered, and yeden oute in to the playn felde with-oute the tentes, and made blowe a trompe high and clere. And that was don for that all theire men sholde drawe towarde hem. And thei dide so as many as myght aschape fro hem that of hem hadde no pyte, ffor ther was of hem so many slayn in that grete myschef, that of the thirde parte thei were well delyuered, and ther-to thei saugh hem of so grete puyssaunce, that thei turned to flight towarde her baner where as thei herde the trompe sowne, ffor the kynges were stynted at the entre of the forest by a river, and ther assembled alle her peple that thei myght haue. And so thei encreased litill and litill, till thei were xx<sup>M</sup> that fledde, some heere and some there, that ne myght come to here baner but with harde payne. And so were thei sory and wroth for theire grete damage and losse, and sore thei compleyned their grete annoye. And x<sup>M</sup> lefte liggyng in the felde what dede and wounded, that no power hadde hem to diffende ne for to greve noon other.

When the kyng Arthur saugh that all the herbage was to hym be-lefte, than he com to Merlin, and asked hym how he sholde do. Quod Merlin, "I will telle yow what ye shall do. Ye shall go here be-fore to the passage at the forde, where as be gadered xx<sup>M</sup> men, and ye shall fight with hem and make hem entende to yow. And the kyng ban and his brother shull go a-bowte, and come on the tothir syde of hem, and com on hem fro the foreste. And thei shull so be astoneed that in hem shall be but litill defence." Than thei departed the toon fro the tother. And the kyng yede thedir as the barouns were a-bidyng that ne wende to haue no drede of noon other, saf of hym; and of hym thei ne drede but litill, for thei trowed

hem wele to diffende agein gretter peple than ther was with hym. And the kynge Ban torned towarde the foreste, and Arthur rode with his company till he com ther as the xj kynges were to-geder assembled. Whan thei come to the passage \*of the forde ther sholde ye haue seyn speres perce thourgh sheldes, and many knyghtes liggyng in the water, so that the water was all reade of blode. And kay heilde so the pas with the baner, and payned that his company gate ouer. And whan the xj kynges saugh so small a peple, hem thourgh preceed and rused, for thei were but iiij<sup>m</sup>, and thei were more than xx<sup>ti</sup> M<sup>i</sup>, thei hadde ther-of grete despitte and shame, and diffended hem apperly. And kay and his feliship kepte hem so clos that noon ne myght hem persch, but longe thei myght it not suffre; but than com Vlfyn hem to socour, that gretly hem confortd, and passed the water delyuerly. And whan thei were ouer thei smyten in a-monge hem so vigorously that oon myght here the crassing of speres half a myle longe. Grete and crewell was the bateile at this assemble, and the noyse grete and huge vpon the helmes and sheldes. And many a noble man lay ther deed and wounded, wher-of was grete damage. But longe thei myght not this endure; but than com Bretell, and hem sustened, and moche he hem confortd. And as soone as bretell was passed the water he saugh hys company at grete myschef, for he saugh Vlfyn drowen down of his horse in the presse, that heilde his swerde in his honde and strongly hym deffended, that noon was so hardy his strokes to a-bide. And whan bretell that perceyved he was sorowfull and pensif, for he hym loved full hertely. He let his horse renne, and smote him so sore that he first mett that he threwe hym and his horse to the erthe. And whan Clarion saugh that he hadde grete sorow at his herte, and seide that he wolde his felowe a-venge yef he in eny wyse cowde. And whan bretell saugh kynge Clorion come, he sette his horse hym a-geyn, and mette so sore to-geder that the sheldes perced, for bothe the knyghtes were stronge and of grete pris and grete maltalente, so that her speres splyndered in peces, and that their passage hurtlid so to-geder with their bodyes and sheldes

King Ban turns towards the forest, \* [Fol. 52b.] and Arthur rides till he comes to the eleven kings. The water is red with the blood of the knights.

Ulfyn comes to succour Kay and his fellows.

They smite so vigorously that the crashing of the spears can be heard half a mile off.

Bretell comes to comfort them, and as soon as he has passed the water he sees Ulfyn borne off his horse by the press. When he perceives this he smites the first knight he met so sore that he threw him from his horse.

King Clarion meets him. They come together with such force that their spears splinter in pieces.

They both lie  
on the earth  
without  
moving.  
Both parties  
come to the  
rescue.

Gifflet, Lucas,  
and the kings  
Brangore, Y-  
diers, Urien,  
and Aguysas  
are unhorsed.

Gifflet is re-  
mounted by  
Kay,

\*[Fol. 53a.]

who smites  
down king  
Loth.  
The Roy de  
Cent Chyva-  
lers

hits Kay so  
sore that he  
bears him to  
the ground,  
and leads his  
horse to king  
Loot, who  
leaps up  
lightly.

Gifflet bears  
a knight of  
the king de  
Cent Chyva-  
lers to the  
ground, and  
leads the  
horse to Kay.  
The king de  
Cent Chyva-  
lers and king  
Loot horse  
king Ventres,

and helmes, that her yen sparkeled that thei semed thei were fallen from their heedes so were thei astoned. And the horses bar hem so harde that the skyn of the horse knees and legges were all to rente, that the blode ran to the erthe. Longe tyme lay the barouns at erthe with-oute remevynge, so astonyed that thei ne wiste whethir it was nyght or day; so thei that it be-helden wende eche hadde slayn other. Thider preceed bothe parties to the rescowe, and ther was grete losse on bothe parties. Than com kay the stiward to the rescowe, and on the tother side come thre kynges. Ther sholde ye haue sein fres encountre, for on Arthurs side was viij, and on the tothir side were xj; and thei smeten to-geder fiersly. Ther was Gifflet vn-horsed, and lucas the botiller, and the kynge brangore, and the kinge Ydiers, and the kynge Vrien, and the kynge aguysas. Ther be-gan the medle grete and merveillouse, and longe it endured, for thei remounted Gifflet be fyn force a-monge his enmyes, and that made kay the stiwarde, for he sette Gifflet on the kynge Ventres horse; and also he smote \*down the kynge loot with a tronchown of a spere that he was sore hurte. And with that stroke com the kynge cleped the roy de Cent chyualers, and hadde in his compayne lx knyghtes of the beste chosen oute. And whan he saugh kay the stiwarde hadde smyte down the kynge loot, hit hym for thought sore, and seide, "But I hym a-venge I am litill to preyse!" He spored his horse that wey and hitte kay so sore that he bar hym vp-right to the erthe, and ledde his horse to kynge loot, and seide, "Sir, haue heer and thenke to a-venge youre annoye, for moche haue we loste this day." And the kynge loot lepte vp lightly. And whan Gifflet saugh kay fallen, and also lucas the botiller, he was sorowfull and hevvy, and hadde recouered a stronge spere, and spored the horse, and smote a knyght of the kynge de Cent chyualers that he bar hym to grounde vp-right, and than hente the horse be the reynes, and presented it to kay; and he lepte vp lightly as he that hadde grete mystere. And the kynge de cent chivalers and kynge loot haue so medled that by fyn strengthe thei haue horsed the kynge Ventres of Garlot vpon the horse of moret de



la roche, and the kynge ydiere vpon the horse of Guyuas le bloy, and the Duke Escam of Cambanyk vpon the horse of drias de la forest sauage. And whan these lordes were horsed, thei seide thei wolde be a-venge vpon the losse that thei hadde received, or elles thei wolde be deed.

king Ydiere,  
and the duke  
Escam.

Than these viij barouns yaf a newe a-saute, but ther was grete losse of men and horse, whan that Arthur com that gretly hem comforted and hem sustenyd, for as soone as he was passed the forde, he smote the horse with the spores, and fonde Vlfyn on fote, and his swerde in his hande, and bretell, that with grete peyne lepte on horse, wherfore Arthur was sore greved. He heilde a grete square spere and smote in to the presse where he saugh thikkeste, and mette with Tradilyuaunt, the kynge of wales, that com a-gein hym all fressh, and he hym hitte so harde, that he smote hym thourgh the shelde, that he yaf hym a wounde in the lifte syde, and hym threwe to the erthe so rudely, that he hym all to brosed, and Arthur hente the horse by the gilte reynes and yaf it to Vlfyn, and bad hym lepe vp delyuerly vpon that stede and thenke to a-venge the shame and the vilony that ye haue hadde. And so he dide lightly, and seide, "Sir, gramercy." And a-noon as Vlfyn was vp he smote in to the presse, and leide on so harde that he brake the presse, he and the kynge and her helpes that newe were come oute of her enbusschement. And thei on the tother side were wroth for the grete damage that thei hadde, and yet were thei more peple be the haluendell than hadde Arthur. Than be-gan the medle right stour, and grete and mortall, wherfore many a fre moder wepte salt teeres. Ther dide kynge Arthur many merueilles in armes, that by his dedis he was knowe in shorte tyme of many oon that neuer hadde hym sein, and they yaf hym place alle the moste hardy of hem, for they ne durste not of hym a-byde a stroke.

The eight ba-  
rons make a  
new assault.

Arthur  
passes the  
ford, and  
finds Vlfyn  
on foot.

He smites in-  
to the thicke-  
st of the  
presse, and  
meets Tradi-  
lyuaunt, the  
king of  
Wales,  
whom he  
wounds on  
the left side,  
and throws  
to the earth.  
Arthur gives  
the horse to  
Vlfyn,

who smites  
into the  
presse.

King Arthur  
does many  
marvels in  
arms.

Whan the kynge, that was called le roy de Cent Chivalers, saugh the kynge Tradelyuaunt \*reuerse to the erthe he was right wroth, for he hym loved with grete love, and he was merueilously wele horsed, and he rode fiercely to kynge Arthur, and smote hym so sore vpon the helme that he was astonyed.

The Roy de  
Cent Chiva-  
lers  
\*[Fol. 53b.]

rides fiercely  
to Arthur,  
and smites  
him on the  
helm.

Arthur  
smites him  
and his horse  
to the  
ground.

Kay gives a  
stray horse  
to Antor,

who smites  
Margnam,

and leads his  
horse to Bre-  
tell.

Giffet de-  
fends Lucas  
against four-  
teen.

Bretell comes  
and smites  
the first he  
meets, and  
slits him to  
the teeth,  
and smites  
off the se-  
cond's arm,  
and the  
third's left  
shoulder.  
Giffet slits  
the head of  
one, and  
takes his  
horse to Lu-  
cas,

who rides a-  
gainst Aguy-  
sans, and  
fells him to  
the ground.

Mares leaps  
upon the  
horse, and

And whan the kyng felte the stroke, hym for thought it sore,  
and so dide kay that was in his company. The kyng cam  
formest grypyng his swerd for to smyte hym thourgh the helme.  
And whan he saugh the stroke come, he couered hym with his  
shelde, and the kyng hym smote so harde, that the haluendell  
fley in to the felde; and the stroke glenched vpon the horse hede,  
and smote it of be the eres. And so thei fill to grounde, the  
horse and his maister. And kay be-heilde and saugh an horse go  
a-stray, and he caught it and yaf it to Antor. And he lepte vp  
lightly, and after caught a spere, and smote margnam, the  
stiwarde of the kyng cleped roy de Cent chiualers, so harde  
thourgh the shelde and the lifte shulder, that the spere hede  
shewed thourgh, and he fill to the grounde vp-right, and ther-  
with brake the spere. And he leyde honde on the horse, and  
ledde it to Bretell be the reyne, that ther-of hadde grete nede.  
And he lepte up delyuerly, and than he be-heilde a-boute in the  
presse, and saugh lucas the botiller lye a-monge the horse feet  
full doelfully. And Giffet a-bode by hym, and deffended hym  
right vigerously, and moche hym preysed and comended, for  
ther was a-geyn hym xiiij, and he but sool by hym-self; and yet  
myght thei not gete on hym no grounde for powert hat thei  
hadden. And whan bretell saugh this he com thider, and smote  
the first that he mette so harde thourgh the helme that he slyt  
hym to the teth, and after he smote the seconde on the arme,  
that he made it fle in to the felde with all the shelde; and than  
the thirthe so harde vpon the lifte shulder that he it deseuered  
from the body. Whan Giffet saugh he hadde socour, he smote  
oon so harde on the temple that he slyt it to the nekke; and he  
fill down deed. And Giffet toke the horse, and ledde it to  
lucas t[h]e boteller. And he lept vp angry and wroth, as he that  
wolde fayne a-venge his shame. And than he hente a spere  
grete and sharpe grounde, and saugh Aguysans, the kyng of  
Scotlonde, and rode a-gein hym full egerly, and smote hym with  
all his myght thourgh the coler of his haubrek so sore that he  
fill to the erthe. And whan Mares saugh hym so delyuered he  
lepte vpon the horse delyuerly, and rode in to the bataile, that

not dide but enforce more and more, and fonde belias and flaundryns, that were arested vpon diras, and on dionas tweyne of her felowes, and peyned hem for to remounte hem on her horse; but so grete was the presse that thei hadde no leyser hem to be-holde. And so thei foughten so strongely that it was merveile to be-holde. And thei smyten in monge hem, and be-gonne to do so wele, that the two felowes were agein sette on horse. And on the tother side faugh the kynge Arthur and his meyne so longe and the noyse and the cry aros of the two kynges that thei hadde vn-horsed. And so thei ronne to the rescowe on bothe sides, that oon for to socour, and the \*tother to helpe the kynge Arthur. Ther was the medle grete. Ther eche wounde and kylde other; but with grete payne were the two kynges rescued and sette on horse. But first was ther grete occision, for the kynge Arthur kepte hem so shorte that thei myght not hem socour for power that thei hadden; and ne hadde be on a-uenture that fill thei sholde neuer haue be rafte from Arthur, for he ran to the rescow of kay and Gifflet, that kynge Ventres, and kynge brangores, and kynge Vrien, and the kynge Abigans, hadde ouer-thrownen from theire horse, and hem defouled vnder the horse feet full lothly, and hadde no mo hem to deffende but lucas the botiller, that these all so moche greved. Whan the kynge Arthur saugh this nede, he turned that wey as wroth as a lyon, and leide a-boute hym on bothe sides, and slow all that he raught with a full stroke, so that thei voyded hys strokes and hym rome. And kay and Gifflet pressed to the kynges, that moche hem hadde greved, and with hem sore foughten. And on the tother side faught bretell and Vlfyn and Antor with the duke Escam of Cambenyk, and a-geyn Tradilyaunt, and a-gein clarion, of Northumberlonde, and agein Carados, that was a noble knyght; so thei made hem to blenche thider, as kynge Arthur faught, that dide merveilouse prowessse of werre. Ther thei stynte that oon agein the tother, for ther was the maister baner, and ne hadde be the kynge Arthur hym-self. Alle thei hadden be discountfited, for these kynges were odde noble knyghtes, and more peple be the toon half than on Arthurs syde; and, therefore,

rides into the battle, and finde Belias and Flaundryns.

They run to the rescue on both sides.

\*[Fol. 54a.]

The two kings are rescued.

Arthur runs to the rescue of Kay and Gifflet,

and slays all about him.

Kay and Gifflet,

and Bretell and Vlfyn fight with the kings.

Kings Ban  
and Boors  
come from  
the forest.

The princes  
and barons  
devise  
among them-  
selves what  
they shall do.  
King Loot  
says he will  
be avenged.

The Roy de  
Cent Chiva-  
lers praises  
the speech of  
Loot,

who proposes  
that seven of  
them should  
go against  
those who  
come fresh  
out of the  
forest;  
the other five  
to remain be-  
hind.  
The seven to  
hold the bat-  
tle near the  
wood, in such  
manner that  
they be not  
enclosed.

\*[Fol. 54b.]

King Loot,  
the king de  
Cent Chiva-  
lers, duke Es-  
cam, and king  
Aguysans  
take with  
them twelve  
thousand  
men, and ride  
to the strait  
between the  
wood and the  
river.

it myght not longe endure with-out grete damage. Than com vpon hem the kynge Ban and the kynge Boors from the foreste, where thei wende to haue no drede of no man lyvinge. And whan thei were come an thei hem sye, thei yaf ascry that all the foreste and the river resounde; and thei saugh well that the losse and the damage moste nede falle vpon hem. Thanne the princes and the barouns drowen a-part to-geder in the medowes, and devised a-monge hem self what thinge that thei myght do. Than seide the kynge loot, "I wote neuer how ye be a-vised to do, but as for me I shall vpon iij or iiij of hem ben a-vengid of myn annoye, sith that all shall be loste. And whan the kynge cleped Roy de Cent chiualers vndirstode how kynge loot hadde seide, he preisede hym moche, and seide that in the same maner wolde he do; and so dide kynge Carados, and the Duke Escam seide the same, and the kynge Clarion of Northumbirlonde seide also in the selue maner. "Now than," quod kynge loot, "I shall telle yow what we shull do. Lete vij of us go a-gein hem that come fressh oute of her enbusshment from the foreste, and fight with hem while we may endure; and the tother v abide here in this bataile. And we shall go a-gein hem with xij<sup>m</sup> men, and viij<sup>m</sup> shull a-bide in this stour; and we shull holde this bataile nygh this wode, vpon the river, vn-to the nyght, in soche manere that they may not vs enclose; and than may we beste departe, for yef we now do fle, we shull lese more than to a-bide stille." To this counseile that kynge loot hadde yove a-corded wele all the prynces; and drough hem a-parte, and disseuerede her \*peple. And the kynge loot, and the kynge de Cent Chiuallers, and the Duke escam of Cam-benyk. And the kynge Aguysans of Scotlonde toke xij<sup>m</sup> in her companye, and made vj wardes, and in euerich of hem ij<sup>m</sup> men. And so thei rode forth the softe pas straitte and clos till they come to the straitte be-twene the wode and the river, as the kynge loot hadde hem taught; and that was the beste counseile that any man myght hem yeve. Thus thei were redy hem to deffende; and the tother v lefte in the bataile that full vigorously hem deffended a-gein the kynge Arthur. Of these v that a-bide

stille was the kynge Brangore, that oon, and the kynge Vrien, and the kynge Ventres, and the kynge Clarion, of Northumbirlond, and Tradilyuaunt, the kynge of North wales; and hadde in her company vij<sup>m</sup> men, and heilde her enbuschement in a litill grove, and ther thei hem diffended right sore, as thei that were full noble knyghtes and of grete renoun; and grete doel and pite was it for the euyll will be-twene hem and the kynge Arthur. And here was sore bataile, and endured till it was even toward nyght. And on the tother side come the kynge Ban and the kynge boors, and leonce and Pharien, that ledde the firste bataile, and come clos a softe pas, and full longe hem thought er thei were mette to-geder. And on the tother parte com a-gein hem the kynge ydiers. And when thei aproched nygh thei lete renne and smyte to-geder so harde that ye myght here the strokes half a myle of length. Ther was a mervellouse stoure and harde bataile, and grete occision of men and of horse, but thei myght not suffre longe, ne endure the peple of kynge ydiers, but were driven bak vpon the warde of kynge Aguyfans of Scotlonde, that gretly hem counforted and sustened. Here be-gan the bataile mervellouse and harde. And the peple of Pharien were sore ouerleide; but as leonces of Paerne com hem to socoure, and a-sailed hem so fiercely, that noon ne abode in the place, but drof hem bak vpon the warde of the Duke escam of Cambenyk. Whan the Duke saugh hem come, he cride his ensigne, and lete renne to theym that he sye comynge, and smote in amonge hem fiercely. Than recouered thei that fledden, and returned a-gein to hem that hadde hem enchased. And ther thei stalleden and foughten the ton vpon the tother till thei were bothe wery for travaile. And so longe endured the fight be-twene hem that her strokes ne peysed but light. Than com on the kynge Boors with the grete baner, wher-of the feilde was ynde, bende of golde. And whan the kynge ydiers saugh hym comynge, he seide, "Ha! now god vs deffende fro deth this day and fro mayme, ffor now I se well that we be alle in pereile of deth, for I se yonder comynge the baner of the man that most is dredde of his enmyes thourgh the worlde. And ther-to he is so

Kings Brangore, Urien, Ventres, Clarion, and Tradilyvaunt remain in the battle, and defend themselves "right sore."

The battle endures till even.

Kings Ban and Boors, Leonce and Pharien, meet king Ydiers.

The people of king Ydiers are driven back upon the ward of king Aguyfans.

Leonces succour the people of Pharien, and drives their enemies upon the ward of duke Escam.

King Boors comes on with the great azure banner barred with gold,

which makes king Ydiers greatly fear.

gode a knyght that alle other be but as hares as in comparison to hym, saf only his brother, to whom no comperison may be made."

The Roy de Cent Chivalers asks who king Boorsia

Whan the kynge that was cleped Roy de Cent chivalers vndirstode the wordes of kynge \*Ydiers, he asked what he was. And he ansuerde, "It is the kynge Boors of Gannes; and I ne wote how, ne whan, he com in to this contre; but, lo, hym yonder, for I knowe well his baner." Than seide the kynge [of] th[e] Cent cheualers, "How com he in to this londe?" "So helpe me god," quod kynge loot, "I wote neuer; but now it shall be knowe who is a knyght." Than seide the kynge Carados,

King Carados says he will go against him.

"I wote not what eche of yow will do; but as for me, I will go hym a-geyns, and yef I haue nede of socour and helpe, so do ye youre dever." And thei seide so thei wolde, and be-taught hym to god that from euell hym sholde diffende. Than departed Carados from these other, and rode clos a softe pase a-gein the kynge Boors. And whan thei approched to-geder nygh a bowe draught, thei lete bothe her horse renne the ton a-gein the tother

He departs to meet king Boors.

When they meet their spears break, and many are thrown to the ground.

as faste as horse myght hem bere, and brake their speris in her metyng. And many ther were that were throwen to grownde, and many wounded to the deth, and many ther were that passen den thorough and come with-oute stroke of spere, and after drough theire swerdes and be-gonne stronge bataille, and harde and merveilouse. Than com the kynge Boors to a knyght that was his godson, and his name was Blaaris, and comaunded hym to bere his baner. And he was a merveilouse gode knyght, and durste not refuse it. And the kynge Boors seide he wolde assay

King Boors commands his godson Blaaris to bear his banner.

He smites a knight so sore that he breaks his neck,

how the bretouns cowde bere armes. Than he hente a grete spere, and rode in a-monge hem that alle the renges fremysshed, and smote a knyght so sore that ther was noon armoure myght hym warante, but that he sente the heede and the shafte thorough the body and threw hym to grounde so rudely that in the fall he brake his nekke, and the spere fley on peces; and than he pulled oute his swerde, and be-gan to do so merveilouse of armes that alle thoo it syen were sore a-basshed, and made hym wey and fly from his strokes as soone as thei saugh hym come towarde hem. And ther hadde the kynge Carados loste to

and does marvellous deeds of arms.

moche; but as the kynge de Cent chivalers hym socoured anon with ij<sup>mi</sup> men, whiche was a worthi knyght and desirouse in armes. And as soone as thei were mette thei heilde hem peryngall; but the prowesse of kynge boors was passynge alle other, for he dide merveilles. And on the tother side dide well the kynge Carados, and the kynge de Cent Chivalers; these suffred many myscheves. And thus thei endured longe tyme.

The king de Cent Chivalers succours Carados with two thousand men. The prowess of king Boors was greater than all the others.

Than com the kynge Ban of Benoyk, that thought it was longe tyme till he were mette with his enmyes. The kynge com in to the stour with hys baner in his honde, and it delyuered to his stiwarde. Crownes of goolde and asure bendes entrauerse lysted as grene as a mede, and the streamers down to the handes of Antony his stiwarde, and also he spredde ouer the eres of his horse and the nekke. And whan the barouns saugh the baner of kynge Ban, thei wyste well that with-ynne short tyme thei moste voyde the feilde, or elles dye yef<sup>1</sup> thei longe a-bide. And a-noon as thei were assembled \*thei on the tother part ne heilde no place. Than the kynge loot com and assembled his company, wepinge with his yen, for he saugh wele that all was loste on his party. Thanne sholde ye haue seye brekyng of speres on bothe sides vpon sheldes, and the erthe to tremble vnder the stedes, and the wode to resounde of the grete strokes that ther was yove to-geder, that men myght haue herde it half a myle longe. And whan the kynge Ban was come the tother party ne a-bode not longe, but were dryven bakke that thei were made to resorte to the fyve kynges and vpon her peple. Here was full grete dolour and grete mortalite of men and of horses, for as soone as the kynge Ban com in to the medlee he be-gan to do so grete martirdom of peple, and so grete occision, that on alle partyes thei fledde from his swerde. And he serched the renges thourgh, and his swerde in his honde, and leide on bothe sydes that ther nas noon so thikke presse but he it disseuered full moche; and gretly was the kynge Ban and his company I-douted. Than com the kynge loot and the kynge de

King Ban comes into the battle with his banner, which he delivers to Antony his steward.

The barouns see that they must leave the field.

\*[Fol. 14b.]

King Loot assembles his company.

There is a breaking of spears on both sides.

When king Ban is come the other party are driven back.

All fly from his sword.

<sup>1</sup> This word "yef" is repeated in the MS.

King Loot,  
the king de  
Cent Chiva-  
lers and Mar-  
gamour see  
king Ban and  
are very  
wroth.

King Loot  
smites Ban  
on the shield.

Ban smites  
Loot and the  
king de Cent  
Chyvalers,

who rolls to  
the earth  
with his  
horse.  
He leaps up.

Brangore  
runs upon  
Ban and  
smites him  
with a great  
stroke.

Ban smites  
him so that  
he falls to the  
ground.

Ban defends  
himself well.

King Arthur  
comes to his  
assistance.

\*[Fol. 56a.]

Cent chivalers and margamour, alle thre; and the bateilles were entermedled that oon with the tother. And whan thei saugh the kyng Ban, that dide hem so moche damage, loot was right wroth, and so were the tother kynges. Than he smote the horse with the spores that wey, his swerde in his honde; and he was a noble knyght and an hardy, and smote the kyng Ban vpon the shelde a grete stroke, that a cantell fleygh in to the feilde. And whan Ban saugh this it a-noyed hym sore; and than he lifte vp the bronde, and ficched hym in the styropes so harde that the Iren bente, and wende to smyte the kyng de Cent Chivalers vpon the helme, and he that doutet, and the stroke blenched, and smote the steede with the spores, and the stroke descended be-hynde, and smote a-sonder the trappure of mayle, and thourgh the horse to the erthe; and so thei frussht bothe on an hepe, the horse and his maister. And whan the kyng was fallen he lepe vp delyuerly on fote, his swerde in his honde, and his shelde coverynge hys side. When the kyng Brangore saugh the kyng de Cent chivalers falle, he ran vpon the kyng Ban, and smote hym so grete a stroke thourgh the shelde that he slit a-wey a grete quarter. And the kyng ban hym yaf so grete a stroke thourgh the helme that he slyt the sercle and the koyf of Iren to the heed, and yef the swerde hadde not glenched he hadde be deed. And he fill to grounde astonyd. Whan the two kynges were releved thei be-gonne the medle a-gein the kyng Ban; but he hym deffended so wele that thei hadde more damage than he; ne ther nas noon of the two kynges but thei hadde loste a grete part of her blode, for the woundes that thei hadde resceyved. And it a-bode not longe er ther come grete damage and losse to the thre kynges, whan the batailes were medled to-geder, and he made hem departe wheder thei wolde or noon. Than fill it that the kyng Arthur fonde the kyng ban on fote, in myddell of the presse, his swerde in his fiste, that hym deffended \*so vigerously that noon ne durst hym a-proche. And he was a moche knyght, and a stronge oute of mesure. And he lepe vpon hem thourgh the presse; and whan he neyghed ner thei made hym wey, for so thei doutet his strokes



that ther was noon so hardy that durst hem a-byde. Ther-with com the kyng Arthur, brekyng the presse, gripynge his swerde, all be-soyled with blode of men and of horse, for he dide many merveilles of armes w~~ith~~ his body. And whan he saugh the kyng Ban at so grete myschef, he wax wode for Ire. Than he rode to a knyght that richely horsed; and Arthur lifte vp the swerde, and smote hym thourgh the helme soche a stroke that he slyt hym to the teth, and he fill to grounde. Than he toke the horse be the reynes, and ledde it to kyng ban, and seide, "Frende, lepe on lightly, for in euell tyme ben oure enmyes entred; anon shall ye se hem for-sake the felde."

Nonedurst-a-bide Arthur's strokes.

Arthur rides up to a knight richly horsed and slits him to the teeth.

He takes the horse to Ban.

Whan the kyng ban was horsed be the helpe of kyng Arthur, he was gladde of that hadde hym founden. And than thei two smyten in a-monge her enmyes. And whan the tother perceyved the grete damage that the kyng arthur and the kyng ban hem dide her peple, that were so loste and discourtised, and that thei hadde loste all talent of wele doyng, and turned the bakkes. And thei hem chased to the wode; but ther were many slayn and defouled. So were thei distreyned be-twene the wode and the river. Ther thei stalled and a-bode, and knewe well yef thei hadde be in the playn thei hadde be in pereyle of deth. Than the kyng loot, and the kyng ventres, and the kyng de C. chiualers, and the kyng Carados, and the kyng vrien and the kyng ydiers, and the kyng brangore, and the kyng of Northumbirlonde, helde hem to-geder; whan marganors hem seide, and badde hem suffre and a-bide, while thei myght for to socour theire peple; for yef thei be thus disconfite, oure peple shull be all loste and distroied.

Ban and Arthur smite in among their enemies,

and chase them to the wood.

Marganors begs the kings to abide and succour their people.

Thus chased hem the kyng Arthur and the kyng ban be-fore alle other, till thei come to a grete water and a depe, where as thei that fledde hadde made a brigge of tymber and of planks. And thei passed over the water after the tother, and so enchased hem the kyng Arthur and the kyng Boors, that thei come to that brigge that was so made, and wolde passe ouer after hem. And than com Merlin and seide, "Kyng Arthur, what wilt thou do? haste thou ouercome thyn enmyes?

Arthur and Ban chase their enemies till they come to a bridge over a great water.

Merlin tells Arthur to go into his land

and to lead  
his friends  
with him.

Merlin goes  
to Blase,

who says he  
is foolish to a-  
bide so much  
with Arthur.  
Merlin tells  
Blase all that  
\*[Fol. 56b.]  
has happen-  
ed.

Blase writes  
all these  
things in his  
book.

Go in to thi londe, and lede with the thy frendes that thow haste brought with the, and hem serue and worschipe at their pleiser, ffor I moste go in to the wode for to my distynes aboute blase, that right moche is my frende." Anoon he departed from Arthur, and entred in to the forest, and fonde blase, that longe after hym hadde desired. And than he asked hym where he hadde so longe a-biden. And Merlin tolde hym how he hadde be a-boute the kyng Arthur for to counseile hym. And blase seide he dide but foly to a-bide so moche a-bowte hym, saf only for to counseile the crowne royall. Than Merlyn tolde hym alle thynges that were falle to the kyng Arthur seth he departed \*fro hym, and how he yede for to fecche socour in the litill breteyne. And than he tolde hym how the hethen peple were entred in to the londes of the barouns, and how thei werred. And blase wrote alle these thinges that Merlin hym tolde, and sette hem in his boke; and ther-by haue we the knowleche ther-of. But now leueth the tale to speke of Merlyn and of blase, and speketh of kyng Arthur and of the twey other kynges that ben in his company.

## CHAPTER XI.

THE DOINGS OF KING ARTHUR AFTER THE BATTLE, AND HIS DEPARTURE  
FOR TAMELIDE.

Arthur, hav-  
ing discom-  
fited his ene-  
mies,

returns glad  
and joyful.

Leonce and  
Pharien and  
Gifflet and  
Lucas keep  
the watch,

Now seith the boke whan that kyng Arthur hadde discountfited his enmyes, and the xj kynges and a Duke, by the counseile of Merlin, that was gon to blase his maister in Northumberlonde. Than he returned gladde and ioyfull of that oure lorde hath yove hym the victorie of his enmyes. Than he com to þe logges wherof the walles layn at the erthe as Merlin hadde beten hem down. Than thei leged and pight teyntes and pavilouns, and hem rested, and lete the hoste be wacched. And leonce and Pharien hadde the gouernaunce of the wacche, and Gifflet and Lucas the botiller. Pharien and leonces kepte towarde the wode, and Gifflet and Lucas towarde the medowes, and alle the tother

lay and rested hem till day, and than thei ete and dranke grete plente, for thei hadde I-nough of vitaille. In this manere rested the hoste till in the morowe, till the kynge Arthur made be leide on an hepe all the wynynge and the richesse that ther was geten. And whan thei hadde herde messe thei com a-gein ther as the tresour was leide to-geder. And the thre kynges it departed a-boute to soche as hem semed was for to do, to on lesse and to a-nother more, after that the *persones* were of astate or degre. And so thei departed to pore knyghtes and squeres that neuer after were pore, in so moche that thei kepte not to hem-self the valew of a peny. And after thei departed stedes a[nd] palfreyes and clothes of silke, and yaf all while ther was ought to departe, and sente a-gein alle knyghtes and squyres and sergeauntes and other meyne, saf xl that sholde go with hem in to Carmelide. Thus yede Pharien and grassien and leonces, lorde of Paerne, and ledde with hem her peple for to kepe her londe and her contrey, that the kynge Claudas ne dede hem no stade.

Whan these barouns were come in-to theire contrey thei boughten londes and rentes wher-with thei leved after in grete honour with the auer that was departed that made hem after riche. And the ky[nge] Arthur lefte in his contrey the two kynges with hym, as ye haue herde. So thei sojourned at bredigan that was in the marche of breteyne the grete, and in the marche of Carmelide; and ther thei a-bode Merlin that sholde come to hem thider. And on the morow, whan Arthur sholde departe his peple, and that he hadde made hem grete feste and grete ioye at bredigan, and the kynges hadde dyned, they yed vp in to the loges \*that were vpon the ryver for to se the medowes and the gardynes. And as thei be-helden, they saugh come a grete karl thourgh the medowes by the ryver with a bowe in his honde, and his arowes vnder his girdell. And in the brooke were wylde gees, that hem dide bathe as theire kynde is to do. The karll drough his bowe, and with a bolte smote oon in the nekke, that it brake in sondre. Than he shette a-nothir bolte, and slowgh a malarde. Than he toke hem, and henge hem be the nekkes at his girdell, and yede towarde the loges where as the

the others rest themselves.

Arthur has all the riches put together in a heap.

The three kings divide the treasure among their followers,

and the steeds and palfreys and clothes of silk.

Pharien and Grassien and Leonces return with their people to their country.

When these barons return to their country they buy lands.

The king's sojourn at Bredigan,

where there is a great feast.

\*[Fol. 57a.]

They see a great churl coming through the meadows,

who kills a goose and a mallard,

and hangs them in his girdle,

and whoops  
to king Ar-  
thur,

who asks the  
churl if he  
will sell the  
birds.

The churl  
has on great  
leather shoes  
and a coat  
and hood of  
russet.  
He seems to  
to be cruel.  
He speaks to  
the king

about the  
treasure that  
is rotting in  
the earth.  
When the  
kings hear  
his words  
they look at  
one another.

King Ban  
asks the  
churl what  
he said, but  
he does not  
answer.  
Ban asks who  
told him that  
king Arthur  
has treasure.  
The churl an-  
swers that it  
was Merlin.

Ulfin comes  
out of a  
chamber,

and knows  
that it is Mer-  
lin,

thre kynges were lenynge, and hadde well seen the shotte of the karll. And whan he come nygh the loges he shette a-nother bolte, and whowped to the kynge Arthur. And whan the karll com nere, the kynge asked yef he wolde selle the briddes. And the cherll seyde, "Ye, with gode will." Quod the kynge, "How wilt thou yeve hem?" And he ansuerde no worde. And the cherll hadde on grete boysteis shone of netes leder, and was clothed in cote and hooode of rosset, and he was girde with a thonge of blakke shepes skyn; and he was grete and longe, and blakke and rowe rympled. The cherll also semed to be crewell and fell, and seide to the kynge, "I ne knowe nought of the kynge that loueth tresoure, and is regrater and a wyssher, that dar not make a pore man riche that myght hym do gode seruyse." Quod the cherll, "I yeve<sup>1</sup> yow these briddes, and yet haue I no more than ye se; and ye haue not the herte for to yeve the thirde parte of youre gode that in the erthe doth rote er ye haue it vp-taken, and that is nether youre profite ne worship." Whan these kynges herde the wordes of the karll thei be-heelde the oon the tother, and than thei seiden, "What deuell who hath tolde this cherll?" Than the kynge ban cleped the karll, and asked hym what he seide; and the karll ne ansuerde no worde, but bad the kynge Arthur to do take the briddes, and than he wolde gon hys weye. "Now, by thy faith," quod kynge ban, "telle me who hath tolde the that the kynge Arthur hath tresour in the erthe." Quod the cherll, "A wylde man tolde me, that is cleped Merlin, and also he tolde me that he sholde this day come to yow for to speke with yow." In the tyme that thei spake thus to-geder, come Vlfin oute of a chamber, and come thider as the kynge spake to Merlin, "Go forth thy wey," quod the kynge, "how may I the trowe that thou haste spoke with Merlin?" Quod he, "Yef ye will leve me, and yef ye ne will, leve me nought; for I ne leve yow nought, and so be we quyte." And whan the cherll hadde seide thus, and after Vlfin a while hadde listened, and than he be-gan to smyle, and wiste wele it was Merlin.

<sup>1</sup> The word "yeve" is repeated in the MS.

And whan Merlin saugh Vlfin, he seide, "Sir stiwarde, take these briddes, and do dight hem for youre kynges soper, that hath not the hardynesse to make a man riche that myght hym well guerdon, and to hym that this day hath spoke with the man that hath hym tolde of the grete richesse vnther þe erthe."

\*Than be-gan Vlfin to lawgh right harde, and seide, "Sir, yef it plese yow come with me here a-bove, for I wolde speke with yow of many thynges." And he seide he wolde go with gode will.

And the kyng be-heilde Vlfin, and saugh hym laugh hertely, and than he required hym to telle why he dide laugh so sore. And he seide that he sholde wyte a-nother tyme. Than yede the cherll so araide as he ~~was~~, and mette with kay the stiward, and seide, "Holde here, sir seneschall, now may ye plume, and as gladly mote the kyng hem ete as I it hym yeve."

"Sir," quod Vlfin, "and this is not the firste tyme." With that com bretell, and hadde wele herde that Merlin hadde seide, and also that Vlfin hadde seyde to hym, that better semed a cherll than eny that was in the worlde. And whan he hadde herde hem a-while speke, he perceyved that it was Merlin, and be-gan to lawgh vndir his mantell right harde.

And the kyng herde hym, and badde hym telle the cause why that he lowgh. And he tolde he wolde telle hym yef the carll wolde assente. And the cherll than be-gan to laugh lowde, and seide to Vlfyn,

"Tell on, for I will that thou do so." Than seide Vlfin to the kyng, "Sir, ne knowe ye not youre frende Merlin, and ne sholde not he come to speke with yow to day." And the kyng seide, "Yesse; wherefore say ye?" "Sir," quod Vlfin, "I sey for that ye knowe hym not so wele as I wolde that ye dide; ffor ye se somme two tymes or thre, and yet ye ne knowe hem not, and ther-of I merveyle."

Whan the kyng vndirstode Vlfyn he was gretly dismayed, that he wiste not what for to ansuere. "Certes," quod Vlfin, "ye haue seyn hym many tymes, and that I knowe well."

Than seide the kyng, "Telle me what is this cherll." "Sir," quod Vlfin, "sholde ye ought knowe Merlin yef ye myght hym se?"

"Yee, trewly," seide the kyng, "right wele." "Thanne be-holde this worthi man, and loke yef ye haue euer

\*[Fol. 57b.]  
and laughs  
heartily.

The king  
asks Ulfin  
why he  
laughs.  
The churl  
meets Kay,  
the steward.

Bretell comes  
in,

and perceives  
that it is  
Merlin.

The king  
asks why he  
laughs.

The churl  
laughs  
loudly.  
Ulfin asks  
the king if  
he does not  
know Mer-  
lin.

The king is  
greatly dis-  
mayed.

He says he has never seen the churl before.

hym seyn." And the<sup>1</sup> kynge hym be-helde, and seide that he hadde hym neuer seyn be-forn. "Trewly," quod Vlfin, "he may sey that euell hath he be-sette his servise on yow: for it is Merlin, that so moche hath don for yow, and loved so moche and holpen of all that he myght do or sey agein alle tho that vpon yow do werre." And whan the kynge Arthur vndirstode this he blissed hym for merveile. And also the two kynges were sore a-merveiled, and seide, "How may this be, merlin; is it thus? neuer dide we se yow in soche habite." And he seide that myght well be so. "Sirs," seide Vlfin, "dismaye yow not, for he shall shewe yow the same semblaunce that ye saugh hym in firste." And thei seide that thei wolde that fayn se.

The other two kings marvel, and say they never saw Merlin in such a habit.

Vlfin takes the kings into a chamber to speak to them.

"Now," quod Vlfin, com with me in to this chamber, for I wolde speke with yow." And thei com in. And than seide Vlfin, "Sirs, ne merveile nought of Merlins dedes, for he shall shewe yow semblaunces I-nowe; and at alle tymes whan he will he chaungeth hym by forse of his art, where-of he is full. \*And

\*[Fol. 58a.]

Gynebans, the clerk, it witnesseth wele; and wyte ye well that ye shall hym se yet many tymes, that ye shull not knowe that it is he; and for that he chaungeth hym so ofte he is dowed of many a man, for ther is many oon in this londe that full gladly wolde se hym deed. Now lete vs go in this chamber, and ye shull se hym in the same semblance that ye saugh hym firste, whan he a-queynted hym with yow." And whan thei come a-gein they fonde Merlin in the halle in the same semblaunce that thei hadde seyn hym in firste. Than thei ronned to hym, and enbraced hym, and made hym grete ioye as thei that hym loved with gode herte. Than thei satte and Iaped, and pleyde with hym alle to-geder; and of the shetynges that thei hadde seyn, and of the wordes that he hadde seide to the kynge. And than

When they return to the hall they find Merlin in the same semblance that they saw him in first.

Arthur tells Merlin that he knows he loves him because he has given him these fowles.

seide Arthur, "Merlin, now I knowe that ye love me, whan with so gode chere that ye have yove me these fowles, and that I sholde ete hem for youre love." And Merlin be-gan to laugh. Thus thei a-bode in ioye and solace till the lenton. And so it fill

<sup>1</sup> The word "the" is repeated in the MS.

that by the love of Merlin Arthur a-queynted hym with a mayden, the feyrest that myght be founden. This mayden was cleped Lysanor, and was doughter to the Eirll Sevain that was deed, and was heyr of the castell of Campercorentyn. This maide was come to do homage to the kynge Arthur, and with here other barouns that dide homage as soone as he hadde conquerid these xj kynges, ffor thei douted that he sholde be-reve hem of her londes, and also thei thought that thei myght no better lorde haue than hym; and some ther were that come with gode will, and some for drede of more losse. And this mayden that was feire com to Bredigan, where-as the kynge soiourned, and was at hoste with a riche burgeys. And so be the helpe of Merlin he spake with her previly, and lay with her a nyght, and that nyght upon her was be-geeten hoot, that after was a full noble knyght, and was also a felowe of the rounde table. This hoot was of right high prowesse, as ye shull heren hereafter. And at mydлenten the kynge toke leve of the damsell, and he and the other two kynges toke their wey in to Tamelide, hym-self the fowrtithe. But of hem now ne speketh not the tale no more now at this tyme, but returneth to speke of the xj kynges that were disconfited, and telleth wher thei be com and whider thei yeden.

Merlin acquaints the king with a fair maiden.

This maid comes to do homage to the king, and with her come other barons.

The king lies with the maiden, and Hoot is begotten.

At midлent the king takes leave of the damsel. He and the other two kings go to Tamelide.

## CHAPTER XII.

THE RETURN OF THE ELEVEN KINGS TO THEIR CITIES, AND THEIR ENCOUNTER WITH THE SAXONS.

Now seith the story that full of sorowe and hevynesse were the barouns of theire disconfiture and losse, and riden forth playnyng and regretinge theire grete damage; ne thei ne ete ne dronke of all that nyght, and no more ne hadde thei don of all the day be-fore, for the bataile hadde endured all the day; and it was full colde weder and grete froste, and therefore thei were at more disese for hunger and for grete colde. Than thei com to a Citee that was cleped Sorhant, and was a town of the kynge Vriens. And a newew of the kynges resceyved them with grete

The barons ride forth after their disconfiture.

They are hungry and cold. They come to Sorhant, and Bandemagu receives

them with  
great joy.  
[Fol. 58b.]

They remain  
till they are  
healed.  
The messen-  
gers of Corn-  
wall and  
Orkney tell  
them of the  
destruction  
that the  
Sarazins did  
through the  
land.  
When the  
lords hear  
these tidings  
their flesh  
trembles,  
and they  
weep ten-  
derly.

King Bran-  
gore prays  
them to come  
to speak with  
them.  
They come  
into Urien's  
great hall,

and are mute  
as if they  
were dumb.

King Clarion  
asks Bran-  
gore what he  
has to say.

Brangore  
tells them  
they have  
heard the  
truth about  
the Saxons.

ioye, and his name was cleped Bandemagu. Ther thei rested and esed hem \*in the town as thei that ther-to hadde grete nede, ffor many of hem were hurt and wounded that a-bode stille till thei were heled. But thei were not ther thre dayes, whan the messengers of Cornewaile and of Orcanye com to hem and tolde hem the losse and the distruxion of the Sarazins that dide thourgh ther londes, and were at a sege before the castell Vandebere, and hadde filde the londe full of here peple, and seide how thei sholde neuer be remeved ne driven oute of the londe. And whan the lordes [herde] these tidynges ther ne was noon of hem but their fleishe trymbled for this auenture that was hem be-fallen, for well thei knewe that thei were destroyed; and than thei wepte full tenderly.

Upon a day the kynge Brangore, that was a wise man, sente his messages to alle the kynges, and praied hem to come speke with hym. And thei come in to Vriens grete halle; and whan thei hadde herde what the kynge hadde seide, thei drough hem alle a-part-to-geder, as thei that her iyen were all reade and for swollen for wepyng, so that vn-nethe myght thei se oon a-nother. And whan thei were alle to-geder thei were alle stille and mewet as though thei hadde be dombe. And whan the kynge Clarion of Northumberlonde saugh thei seide no worde he aros vpon his feet, and seide to the kynge Brangore, "Sir, I am come hider to here what ye will sey, for yester even ye sente for vs, and I am now come; now may ye sey youre pleiseir, and I will go my wey, for I have now no nede to pley ne Iape; and after may ye speke to these barouns of youre nede. And I sey it for this, that I heere no worde in hem spoken." And the kynge Brangore seide, "I shall telle yow the cause why I sente for yow, lordinges." Quod he, "we have herde the trouthe that the sasnes of the kyn of Aungier, of Saxoyne, be entred in to oure londes and in to oure heritages, and haue grete part of oure londe distroied and brente, and haue be-seged the Castell of Vandebere, in the marche of Cornewaile; and therfore ye moste sette hasty counseile how we shull spede that thei were driven oute of the londe, or elles be we deed and disherited, we and oure



heyres for euermore. Ye knowe well that we heue loste in this chyuaachie that we have made vpon the kynge Arthur. Ne of hym ne of his londe gete we no socour; and on this side of the kynge Leodegan of Tamelide, that gladly wolde vs helpe and socour yef he hadde power; but the kynge Rion, that is so myghty and riche, vpon hym werreth, and hath do this two yere. Ne the kynge Pelles of lytenoys, for he kepeth the kynge Pelly-nor his brother that lyeth seke, of whiche se[k]nesse he shall neuer be heled till he come that shall brynge to ende the auentures of the seint Graal. Ne of the kynge Alain, his brother, that lith in sekenesse, and shall neuer be warissshed till the beste knyght of alle Bretouns come and aske hym why he hath that maladye, and what thinge sholde be hys helpe. And of the kynge of Sorloys ne may we haue no socour, ffor Galehaut, the sone of the Geaunte, of the oute yles, werreth vpon hym, and will that that holde his londe of hym, and he hym diffendeth as he may. Ne of the kynge Berennain ne may we haue \*no socour; ne of the kynge Anadonain, ne of the kynge Clamadas, for alle these werreth; and Calchous, that is cosin to the kynge de Cent chialers, that now for vs hath traueyled—god quyte it hym! And I knowe wele as soone as Galehaut may haue conquered these two remes, that than he will come renne vpon vs, for he desireth nothinge so moche as for to haue the reame that was Vterpendragon. Thus can we no counseile but god of his mercy vs helpe and rede; and while we be now to-geder, lete vs ordeyne what is beste to do, for it is nede. And yef it be so that we discorde, than be we vtterly distroyed, for well ye knowe that we haue loste grete auoir, where-with we myght wele haue mayntened oure werres a-gein the saxoyns. And witeth it wele that this damage haue we be the counseile of Merlin, that wente to fecche the kynge ban of Benoyk and the kynge boors his brother, in the litill Breteyne, that ben the beste knyghtes of the worlde. And he hath do hem to make homage to kynge Arthur; and witeth it wele also that as longe as Merlin is in contrey a-gein vs we shull not a-gein hym endure, ffor noon ne is so wise ne so puyssant that may of hym be-ware, ffor he knoweth alle thynges that be to come, and

They can get  
no succour  
from king  
Leodegan,

nor king  
Pelles,

nor king  
Alain,

nor the king  
of Sorloys,

nor king  
Berennain,  
\*[Pol. 59a.]

nor king  
Anadonain,  
nor king  
Clamadas.

Galehaut,  
when he has  
conquered  
two realms,  
will come  
upon the ba-  
rons.

They have  
lost much  
through the  
counsel of  
Merlin, who  
went to fetch  
kings Ban  
and Boors.

They cannot  
endure as  
long as Mer-  
lin is in the  
country.

They must  
save the land  
from the  
Sarazins.

also that is do and seide; and therefore I sey wepinge, ne makyng of sorowe, ne may vs not a-vaile; but wemen shull wepe. And lete vs take hede to saue the peple and the londe fro these vn-trewe and misbelevynge sarazins that thus sodenly be entred vpon vs. Therefore, for the reuerence of oure lorde, lete vs haue pite of the peple and the londe and on oure self." And ther-with he satte down and was longe tyme er eny baroun seide eny mo wordes.

King Trade-  
lyvauntrises,

and counsels  
the barons to  
assemble all  
their chivalry  
against the  
Sarazins,

and give  
them battle.

The lords  
praise Tra-  
delyvaunt for  
his counsel.

They are to  
stuff the city  
of Huydecan,

\*[Fol. 59b.]  
and set in  
each garri-  
son as much  
people as  
they can,

and fight  
with them  
when they  
are hungry.

Than a-ros the kynge Tradilyuaunt, of North Wales, and seide as he that was a full wise man and wele I-learned, "The beste counseile that I se is that we go stuffe the marches on this partye ther the saxouns comen, and lete make all the chyualrie, that we may assemble of all the chyualrie that we may, and lete kepe the passages, that ther come to hem no more socour ne vitaille than thei haue now; and in the meene while lete vs geder oure kyn and oure frendes and sowderes out of alle londes, and lete vs yeve hem bateile as soone as we may be assembled, for other-wise I can not se how thei may be remeved fro the sege." Whan the lordes vndirstode this that the kynge Tradelyuaunt hadde seide, thei preised hym moche, and seide it was the beste counseile that myght be sette, and ther-to thei a-corded alle to do as he hadde seide. Than thei asked that whiche marches thei sholde garnyssh, and with what peple; and soche was theire counseile that thei sholde go with as moche peple as thei myght brynge of hem that were lefte of the bataile to the Citee of Huydecan for to garnyssh it there. And so thei dide it stuffe. And that was a grete Citee and a stronge. And than with the firste puyssaunce that we may make, lete vs distroye the vitaille fro them thourgh the contreye, and lete vs sette in eche garnyson \*as moche peple as we may, and yef we do thus, I sey yow for sothe that we shull thus distroyne them more than and we faught with hem euery day. And whan we se that thei be-for hungred, and that thei be not encresed of more peple than thei be now, than lete vs assemble oure peple and fight with hem, and yef we may hem discounfite, we shall be riche and in reste alwey aftere, and this is the beste counseile that I se in this cas.

Now lete eche man sey that hym likes, for I haue seide myn advise."

**T**han a-ros the kynge loot and seide, "Certes, sirs, I can not se how we may vs so garnysh, and the marches where as thei go and come, but that we shull haue grete damage of the kynge Arthur, be the helpe of the two kynges and of Merlin, that knoweth all oure ordenaunce, and he ne loveth vs nothinge, ffor as soone as thei knowe that the Saxons be entred, thei shull come for to distroye vs fro Tintagell, where thei haue sette their wardes; and on the tother syde toward brialen, that is vij myle fro Tyntagell, thei will assaile vs ofte sithes; and also at the Castell de la Roche, ther thei haue made her garnyson that may vs moche greve, ffor thei haue it stuffid with vitaille and peple that thei haue no drede of vs, ne of the saxons that be risen a-gein vs by the discorde that is be-twene vs, and therefore I sey, yef thei renne vpon vs on two partyes we shull haue grete disease, for yef the Saxons haue the hier honde of vs, we shull firste be destroyed; and as for me, I ne sey not but that I am redy to pursue what that euer ye will ordeyne and do, and therefore sey better yef ye can."

King Loot rises,

and says that Arthur will do them great damage,

and destroy them at Tintagel.

If the Saxons get the upper hand the barons will be first destroyed.

**W**ith this a-rose the kynge de Cent chivalers and seide, "Feire lordes, of that the kynge loot seith that he douteth the kynge Arthur, and the kynge ban, and the kynge boors, of Gannes, and his helpers, of this we nede not to drede, ffor a messenger me tolde this othir day that kynge Arthur, and kynge ban, and kynge Boors his brother, ben gon oute of this contrei and go to socour the kynge leodegan, of Tamelide, that hath werre a-gein the kynge Rion, of Irelande, and thei go in maner of sowdiours, and all this hath Merlin I-made; but he hath well stuffed alle his forteresses, for he knoweth well of this that is vs be-fallen, wherefore he goth the more hardely, for he knoweth well he dare haue no drede of vs, and of his londe haue ye no fere of no damage; and yef he ne were not gon, I wolde wele counseile that the peas were made be-twene hym and vs in somme maner wise, that he myght vs helpe to drive oute this hethene peple out of this londe that neuer shall a-wey be enchased but god sette to his counseile,

The king de Cent Chivalers rises,

and says that kings Arthur, Ban and Boors have gone to succour king Leodegan,

but Merlin has stuffed all the forteresses.

The king counsels that the marches be garnished, and that then they take a castle called the "roche of Saxons."

\*[Fol. 60a.]

The lords cannot guess why Arthur had left his land.

They are sorry to be at strife with Merlin. They agree to garnish the marches of Galnoy and Gorre and Galvanoie. They send after all that can bear arms.

The first city they stuff is Nantes.

King Ydiers goes there with three thousand men.

The people of the city are glad.

They fight frequently with the Saxons and often win.

and the beste that I can se is that the marches be garnysshed as the kynge Tradilyuaunt hath seide; and whan the marches ben garnysshed, than moste we take counseile of oon stronge Castell that thei haue in this contrey, that is cleped the roche of saxons, wherof a feire mayden is lady that is suster to Hardogebrant that moche knoweth of egremaunye, be whom thei \*haue grete socour and helpe but yef we take hasty counseile."

Whan the lordes vndirstod that kynge Arthur was gon and lefte his londe, than thei hadde grete thought wherefore it myght be; but no wise cowde thei devise the cause, but that thei wiste wele that Merlin it made, and yef the myght thei wolde repente with gode will of the stryfe that thei hadde a-gein Merlin, but to late thei were to repente. And in the ende thei acorded to garnysse the marches of Galnoye and of Gorre, and of galuonye towarde Cornewaile and Orcanye. And than thay sente after grete and smale, alle tho that myght bere armes, and sowdiours of straunge londes that wolde take wages, and tho that coveyted lose and pris; and so litill and litill thei encreased. But oute of the londe that longed to kynge Arthur ne com not oon sole man, for thei hadde no couetise of theire auers, for theire lorde hadde hem yoven I-nough.

The first Citee that these kynges stuffed was Nautes in breteyne, that was towarde Cornewaile, for it was a passage ther the Saxons repeired moste. And thedir yede the kynge Ydiers with iij<sup>M</sup> men of armes of hem that ascaped fro the bataile. And whan the kynge Ydiers was come, thei of the Citee were gladd, for thei<sup>1</sup> were in grete affray, and with-out counseile of the saisnes, that all day rode thourgh the londe, and so moche be purchased of kynges and Dukes as he that was enterpendant, that he hadde vij<sup>M</sup> at his baner of Sowdiours. And thei kepte wele the contre ther-a-boute, and ofte tyme fought thei with the saisnes, and ofte sithes thei wonne. And so com the renoun in to the hoste, that thei durste not ride that wey with-out grete foyson of peple. And so on that part the kynge Ydiers kepte hem so streyte that thei myght haue no socoure of no vitale.

<sup>1</sup> The word "thei" is repeated in the MS.

The tother Citee that thei yede to stuffe was cleped Wydesans, and thedir yede the kynge Ventres of Garlot, and ledde with hym knyghtes that were lefte of the hoste. And whan thei com to Wydesande in Cornewaile the lordes made hym grete ffeste, for gretly were thei discourtforted of the grete hoste of saisnes that thei hadden seyn passe be-fore the Citee, and ledde a-wey alle theire prayes, and alle theire townes a-boute brente and exiled. And as soone as kynge Ventres was come, he stuffed it wele with vitaille and with peple, and sesed the beste tour and the beste fortresse. Than sente he for sowdiours thourgh the londe, and in other contreyes, so that he hadde a vij<sup>m</sup> what on horse-bakke and on fote men with hem of the contrey, where-of were v<sup>m</sup> defensable. And so wele he kepte his marches that the saisnes hadde but litill socour, and ofte sithes he faught with hem where the saisnes loste more than wonne; ffor the kynge Ventres was a noble knyght and hardy and enterpendaunt. He hadde a sone be his wyf, \*a yonge bacheler of xvj yere of age, that was of mervelouse grete bewte; and the wif of kynge Ventres was suster to kynge Arthur on his moder side, Ygerne, that was wif to Vterpendragon, and wif also to Hoel, Duke of Tintagell, that be-gat basyne, the wif of kynge Ventres. And vpon this basyne be-gate he his sone, that was so gode a knyght and hardy, as ye shall here her-after, and how he was oon of the C.C.I. knyghtes of the rounde table, and oon of the moste preysed, and his right name was Galashyn, the Duke of Clarence, that the kynge Arthur hym yaf after he hadde wedded his wif Gonnore. This Galashene of whom I speke, whan that herde tidinges how the kynge Ventres his fader hadde foughten with kynge Arthur, his oncle, and he herde the grete prowessse and the grete debonertee that was in hym, he com to hys moder basyne, and seide. "Feire moder, ne were not ye doughter to Duke Hoel of Tintagell and to the quene Ygerne, that after was wif to Vterpendragon, that be-gat, as I herde sey, thys kynge that is cleped be his right name, Arthur, that is so noble and worthi a knyght that xj princes hath disconfited with so small a peple as he hadde as I haue herde sey? I pray yow telle me the trowthe yef ye can,

The next city they stuff is Wydesans, and king Ventres leads his knights to it,

and stuffs it well with victuals and people.

The Saxons get but little succour.

\*[Fol. 60b.] King Ventres has a son of great beauty. His wife is sister to king Arthur on his mother's side.

Galeshyn is one of the knights of the round table.

He asks his mother if she is not sister to king Arthur.

how it is, for I may not trowe that he sholde be of soche herte as is recorded of hym, but yef he were sone unto Vterpendragon, that in hys tyme was oon of the beste knyghtes of the worlde."

She weeps,

and says that Arthur is her brother, and that her mother often complained at the loss of her son.

Whan the moder vndirstode here sone that so here a-resoned, hir yen be-gonne to water, that the teers wette her chekes and hir chyn, and seide, sighynge and wepinge as she that was hevy and tender for her brother that hir sone remembred, "Ffeire sone," quod she, "knowe this truly that he is youre vncler and my brother and cosin to youre fader on the modirside of Vterpendragon, as I haue herde my moder sey many tymes whan she here complayned prively in her chamber for her sone that the kynge Vterpendragon made it to be deluyered to a cherll as sone as it was born, and how all the matere hath sethe be discouered of Antor, that hym hath norished, be-fore the barouns to whom that Merlin tolde the trouthe, and how that Vlfin dide witnesse this thinge for trewe, that so wele was trusted of Vterpendragon, and how he ordeyned the mariage of my moder and the kynge; but the barouns of this londe ne will not knowe hym for her lorde, and oure lorde, that is so mercyfull, hath hym chosen thourgh his high myracle that he hath shewed many sithes." And than she tolde hym of the ston and

Basynne tells Galashene of the stone and the sword.

of the swerde, and alle the auenture as it was be-fallen. And whan Galashene vndirstode his moder, he prayed god that thei sholde neuer wele spede that hym were ageyns, "and," quod he, "god lete me neuer dye till that he hath made me knyght. Ha now god yeve me grace to do so moche that he may me girthe with my swerde, and I shall neuer departe fro hym while I may lyve yef he will me with-holde a-boute hym." With that he departed from his moder and yede into a chamber, and be-gan to stodye howe he myght spede to go to the kynge Arthur. Than he be-thought hym to sende a messenger \*to Gaweyn, the sone of kynge loot, his cosin, and sende hym worde that he sholde come to speke with hym at newewerke, in brochelonde, as pryvely as he myght, and that he be there the thirde day after Phasche with-oute eny faile. Than Galashene com oute of the chamber and gat hym a messenger and sente to his cosin Gaweyn.

Galashene departs from his mother and goes to his chamber.

\*[Fol. 61a.]  
He sends a messenger to Gaweyn.

But now rested the tale of the message of Galashene and speke of the kynges, how thei departed fro Shorhant, and wheder thei wente, and telleth of the auentres that to hem be-fillen.

**N**ow, seith the boke, that after that kyng ventres, of Garlot, was departed fro the Citee of Sorhant, and the other barouns also, as ye haue herde, That than the kyng loot wente to the Citee of Gale with iij<sup>m</sup> knyghtes and fightynge men of hem that were lefte in the bataile where thei hadde be discounfited. And whan he com thider the Cetizenis made of hym grete ioye, ffor gretly thei were affraied of the saisnes that eche day rode and renne thourgh the contrey, and toke prayes and putte fire in townes a[nd] vilages all a-bowte as thei wente, and dide grete damage. And whan the kyng was come thider he sente and somowned all the peple that he myght, bothe fer and nygh, of sowdiers, and with-Inne a monethe he hadde assembled mo than viij<sup>m</sup> on horse and on fote, alle defensable, with-oute hem of the Citee, where-of were iiij<sup>m</sup> for to kepe the Citee. And he kepte right wele the Citee and the contre environ that noon that entred ne myght but litill it mysdo; and ofte tymes he faught with the saisnes whan that he herde telle that thei come to forrey, and ther wan the pore bacheleres that ther-to hadde grete myster; and ther the kyng loot ne toke neuer thinge fro hem that thei dide wyne, but frely yaf hem all, and ther thourgh encreased his grete loos that the peple hym yaf. And therefore com to hym moo than iij<sup>m</sup> men for the grete bounte that thei herde of hym speke, whiche ne wolde neuere haue hym seyn but for the high renoun that was of hym spoken, and that he was manly and wise and full of largesse, and ther-of shewed wele his sones after hym, but oon yet more than another, after the gode lynage that thei were come of, and I shall telle yow how.

**T**his is trouthe that the wife of kyng lotte was suster to kyng Arthur by his moder side, in the same manere as was the wif of kyng ventres. And of the wif of kyng loot com Gawein, and Agrauayn, and Gaheret, and Gaheries; these iiij were sones to kyng loot. And of hir also com Mordred, that was the yonghest, that the kyng Arthur be-gat. And I will

King Loot goes to the city of Gale with three thousand knights.

He summons all the people to come to him.

He keeps the city and the country round well.

Men come to him on account of his great bounty.

The wife of king Loot is sister to king Arthur. Her sons are Gawein, Agrauayn, Gaheret, and Gaheries, and Mordred who Arthur begat.

When the  
barons were  
assembled at  
Cardoell,

\*[Fol. 61b.]

Antor and  
Kay and Ar-  
thur were in  
the same  
lodging with  
king Loot  
and his wife.

Arthur is a  
fair young  
squire.

He loves the  
wife of king  
Loot.

Loot goes out  
at midnight  
to the black  
crosse.

telle yow in what manere, for so moche is the storye, the more clere that I make yow to vndirstonde in what wise he was be-geten of the kynge; for moche peple it preyse the lesse that knowe not the trouthe. Hit be-fill in the tyme that the barouns of the reame of logres were assembled at Cardoell in walys, for to chese a kynge after the deth of Vterpendragon. And the kynge loot brought thider his wif, and so dide many a-nother baroun. Hit fill so that the kynge loot was loigged in a faire halle, he and his meyne; \*and in the same loigyng was Antor and his sone Kay and Arthur, in the pryvieste wise that he myght. And whan the kynge knewe that he was a knyght, he made hym sitte at his table, and Kay, that was a yonge knyght. And the kynge lotte hadde do made a cowche in a chamber, where he and his wif lay. And Antor lay in myddell of the same chamber, and kay and Arthur hadde made her bedde atte the chamber dore of kynge loot, in a corner, like as a squyre sholde ly. Arthur was a feire yonge squyer; and he toke grete hede of the lady and of hem that were a-bouten hire. And he saugh that she was feire and full of grete bewte, and in his herte he coveted her gretly and loved; but the lady ne knewe it not, ne toke ther-of noon heede, for she was of grete bounte and right trewe to hir lorde. Hit fill that the barouns hadde take a counseile for to speke to-geder at the blak crosse. And whi it was cleped the blake crosse ye shall here her-after, and the names of the knyghtes of the rounde table, but yet the tyme is not come to speke ther-of more. At this crosse the barouns toke a day for to assemble erly on a morowe; and so it fill that on the nyght before that the kynge loot sholde go to this counseile, and he comaunded that previly his horse were sadeled a-boute mydnyght and his armes were alle redy. And thei dide all his comaundement so secretly that noon it perceyved, ne not the lady her-self. Thus a-roos the kynge a-boute mydnyght, that his it ne wyste ne a-perceyved it nought. And he wente to the parlement to the blake crosse, and the lady left a-lone in the chamber in her bedde. And Arthur, that of alle this toke gode kepe, sawgh well how the kynge was gon. And he a-roos as stilliche as he myght, and yede to bedde



to the lady, and lay turnynge and wendynge, that noon other thyng durste do leste the lady sholde hym a-perceyve. And hit fill so that the lady a-woke and turned hir toward hym, and toke hym in her armes as a woman slepyng, that wende verely it hadde ben her lorde. And that nyght was be-gete Mordred, as ye haue herde. And whan he hadde don his delite with the quene, a-noon after she fill on slepe. And Aurthur a-roos slelyly that he was not a-perceyved, till on the morowe, that he hym-self it tolde at the dyner, whan he serued her at table knelyng. And so it happed that the lady seide, "Sir squyre, arise vp, for longe I-nough haue y[e] be knelyng." And he ansuerde softly, and seide that he ne myght neuer deserue the bountees that she hadde hym don. And she hym asked what bounte it was that she hadde hym don. And he ansuerde he wolde not in no wise telle it here but yef she hym ensured that she sholde hym not discouer to no persone, ne purchase hym no blame, ne harme. And she seide that it sholde not hir greve, and ensured hym with gode will, as she that of this thyng ne toke noon kepe. And than he tolde hir how he hadde leyn by her that \*nyght; and than hadde the lady grete shame, and wax all rody, but noon ne knewe the cause. And than the lady lefte her mete vntterly. And thus lay Arthur by his suster, the wif of kyng loot, but neuer after it fill her no more. And so the lady vndirstode that she was grete by hym; and the childe that she hadde at that tyme was of hym with-oute faile. And whan the childe was born, and also the tidynges spredde a-brode that he was the sone of Vterpendragon, she loved hym so moche in her herte, that no man myght it telle. But she durste make no semblant, for the kyng loot hir lorde; and she was sory for the werre that was be-twene hym and the barons of the reame.

Upon a day Gawein com fro huntynge, and clothed comly in a robe that was warme as a robe for the wynter, and ledde in honde a leeshe of grehoundes, and ledde also two brace folowinge hym. And it be-com hym full wele all thyng that he dide: and he also was of the feirest makynge that eny man myght be as of his stature. But the tale ne of hym deviseth no

Arthur rises quietly and goes to bed to the lady.

That night was begotten Mordred.

Arthur rises slyly. On the morrow

he asks the lady's pardon, and tells her how he had lain by her. \**[Fol. 62a.]*

When the lady knows that Mordred is born, and that its father, Arthur, is the son of Uterpendragon, she loves him.

Gawein returns from hunting.

The condition of his body.

more here saf only of a tecche that he hadde, that whan he a-roos that he hadde the force and myght of the beste knyght that myght be founde, and whan he com to the houre of pryme he doubled, and at the houre of tierce also; and whan it come to mydday he com a-gein to his firste strength that he hadde at the houre of tierce; and whan it come to the houre of noone he doubled, and alle houres of the nyght, and in the morowe he com a-gein to his firste force; this was the custome of Gawein. Whan Gawein entred the halle, as ye harde, his moder lay in a chamber by a chymney wher-ynne was a grete fiere, and she was right pensif for her brother the kynge Arthur, and for the barouns that were departed fro hym in euyll will, and of the grete mortalite of peple that was come by the folý of the barouns of the londe, and also of the saisnes that were entred in to the londe, wher-fore thei were in a venture to be distroide; and ther was she sore dismayed.

He finds his mother pensive from thinking of Arthur.

The lady weeps because Gawein is not a knight,

and tells him he should be at the court of king Arthur,

\*[Fol. 62b.]

and that he and his brethren are much to blame because they do

And whan the lady saugh Gawein, that was so feire a yonge squyer and moche of his age, and thought it tyme for hym to be a knyght, and than she be-gan to wepe, and that heviend moche Gawein, and asked wherefore that she dide wepe, and she ansuerde and seide, "Feire sone, that I haue grete cause, for I se yow and youre bretheren that spende youre tyme in folý, that fro hens-forth ye oughten to be knyghtes and bere armes, and ye sholde be at the court of kynge Arthur, for he is youre oncle, and is the beste knyght of the worlde as it is seide, and ye sholde hym serue, and purchase the pees be-twene hym and youre fader, for it is grete damage of the euell will be-twene hem and the other barouns of the londe that sholde hym love and serue, but for their pride thei deyne not hym to knowe for her lorde, and wele it sheweth that it displeseth our lorde, for more haue thei loste than wonne in here stryf; and on the tother side \*the saisnes be entred in to the londe that vs will distoye but yef god vs helpe, and ne we ne shall no helpe haue of hym that sholde hem alle enchace oute of this londe that is the kynge Arthur, and therefore ar ye moche to blame and youre b[r]ethren, for now sholde ye bere armes and seche the acorde of youre oncle and of youre

fader by what wey thei myght be made frendes, and yo do nought elles euery day but hunte after the hare thourgh the felde, and so lese ye youre tyme, and ther-fore me semeth ye ought to haue blame."

nothing but hunt the hare.

Whan Gawein vndirstode his moder, he seide, "Moder, sey ye for trouthe that this Arthur that now is kyng that he be youre brother and myn oncle?" "Feire sone," seide she, "ne doute yow nought, for youre oncle is he trewly." And than she tolde hym, fro the be-gynnyng to the ende, all how it was. And whan Gawein hadde all vndirstonde, he seide full debonerly, "Feire moder, ne be not ther-fore so pensif, for, be the feith that I owe on to yow, I shall neuer be girde with swerde ne bere helme on myn hede till that the kyng Arthur make me knyght, yef in me be so moche valoure that he will me a-dubbe, and we will go to courte for to fecche oure armes and helpe to mayntene his lordship a-gein alle tho that hym will greue or anoye." "Feire sone," than seide the lady, "for me shull ye neuer be letted, ffor grete gladnesse sholde it be to me yef oure lorde wolde graunte that ye might do so moche that youre fader and youre oncle were gode frendes, for than sholde I haue gladnesse at myn herte, and I ought wele aboue alle other." "Dame," quod Gawein, "cesseth now at this tyme, for wete it well, by I ones oute of my fader house, I will neuer returne ne entre ther-ynne a-gayn till that my fader and myn oncle be acorded, though that I sholde do right moche a-gein my fader will." "Feire sone," seide the moder, moder, "god graunte yow grace this to performe."

Gawein asks whether Arthur is really his uncle.

He says he will not be gird with sword till Arthur makes him a knight.

The lady says she would rejoyce if his uncle and father were friends.

Gawein says he will not return to his father's house till they are so.

In the tyme that Gawein and his moder spake thus to-geder com in Agravayn and Gaheret and Gaheries, and com be-fore theire moder, that heilde stille her talkynge with Gawein. And than seide Agravayn to Gawein, "Ye be more to blame than eny other, for ye be oure eldeste brother, and ye ought to lede vs forth, and that we sholde be knyghtes, and serue hym that all the worlde of speketh that a-boute hym repeire. And we ne do but as musardes, and ne a-wayte nought elles but whan we shall be take as a bridde in a nette, for the saisnes be but a iourne hens, that all the contre robbe and distroye. Ne we ne haue not peple

Agravayn, Gaheret, and Gaheries enter.

Agravayn blames Gawein for not leading them forth,

and proposes  
that they  
help to de-  
fend the land  
against Ar-  
thur's ene-  
mies.

Gawein  
praises his  
brother for  
his speech,  
and says they  
must move  
\*[Fol. 63a.]  
within four-  
teen days.  
Their mother  
is full of joy,  
and says she  
will give  
them horse  
and harness.

The kings are  
still sorrow-  
ful and wroth  
at their dis-  
comfiture.

Clarion rides  
to his city  
Bellande, and  
fills it with  
three thou-  
sand men.

He greatly  
distresses the  
Saxons, and  
destroys  
their vic-  
tuals.  
The king de  
Cent Cheva-  
liers departs  
for Sorhant  
with three  
thousand  
men.

He is full of  
high prowess  
and a right  
wise man.

to chase hem hens but by the prowess of the kynge Arthur. But lete us take oure armes of hym, and helpe to defende his londe a-gein his enmyes; ffor that is the beste that I can se, for here ne may we nought gete. And, ther-fore, better it were for vs to do some prowess in his servise, yef we myght be of soche valoure, than here to be take to prison as cowardes, and lese oure time of oure ages." And whan Gawein vndirstode the speche of his brother, he hadde of hym hertely ioye, and moche he hym preysed, and ansuerde that so wolde he do; "and, therefore, in haste lete vs a-pareile vs, for we will meve \*hens with-ynne xiiij dayes." And whan the moder saugh that hadde this vnder-taken, she was full of ioye, and thanked god hertely. And to hem she seide, "Dismay yow nought of no-thinge, for I shall ordeyne yow horse and harneys." And ther-of were thei gladde and merye. But now here resteth the tale of the moder and of the childeren, and speketh how the kynges departed fro Sorhant, that be yet sorowfull and wroth for theire discomfiture and losse, and also for the saisnes that be entred in to her londes and Contrees.

**N**ow seith the story that whan these thre kynges were departed fro their felowes fro Shorhant, that thei a-bode till sowderes com to hem grete plente. And than departed Clarion, the kinge of Northumberlonde, and rode to his Citee I-cleped bellande, that is grete and so feire, and garnyssed it wele with thre<sup>M</sup> men of armes, with-oute hem of the Citee self, that were wele v<sup>M</sup> or mo. And he kepte wele the marches a-boute hym, and many tymes faught with the saisnes like as ye haue herde tolde. And some tyme he wan, and many tymes he loste, as is the fortune of werre. And right moche he greved the saisnes, for he distrud the prayes and the vitaille, so that the foreyours myght nought fynde in the contrey for to take. After that departed the kynge de Cent chyaliers fro the Citee of Sorhant with iij<sup>M</sup> men of armes, and wente to the Citee of malonant, where he hadde a gentill lady. This Cite marched to his londe, but for it was nerre the passages where as the Saxons dide passe, that was the cause that he com thider, for he was full of high prowess, and also right a wise man and a noble knyght, and

hadde euer-more in his company an hundred men on horsebak armed whan he hadde leeste peple; and ther-fore was he cleped le Roy de Cent chiualers, that is to sey, kynge of an hundred knyghtes; but his right name was cleped Aguysans. And he kepte right wele the marche and the contrey ther-a-boute, that litill wonne the sarazins vpon hym. After that departed the kynge Tradelyuans, of North wales, fro the Cite of Sorhant, and wente in to North walis to his City with iij<sup>M</sup> men of armes. And his peple were of hym gladde, for thei hadde be in grete drede of the Saxouns, that wente thourgh the londe and dide hem grete harme and damage, ffor the passages were ther to go to the roche of saisnes, where-of thei were sore a-noyed and greved. And he sente thourgh his londe, and somowned alle tho that myght armes bere, and for sowdiours bothe fer and nygh, so that he assembled to-geder what on hors and on fote with the peple that he hadde brought fro the bataille vij<sup>M</sup> with-out the men of the Citee, wher in was iij<sup>M</sup> of dwellers. And so he hym defended the beste wyse that he myght, and moche he hem greved toward the Castell that Carnyle, the suster of hardogabran, kepte in her baillie. Ne that passage ne myght not these thre \*kynges kepe for no power that thei hadden; but that ther com socour be that wey to the saisnes of vitale and of men be that castell that was stronge, and by the enchauntement of Carnile, that moste cowde of that art, but yef it were Morgain, the suster of kynge Arthur, and Nimiane, that Merlin dide love so moche, that he taught here alle the merveiles of the worlde as this boke shall declare yow here-after. And by that Castell where-of I speke hadde the saisnes all her recouerer and all her socour of the contrey, wherthourgh thei myght neuer be put oute of the londe till that kynge Arthur drof hem oute, and the kynge Ban and the kynge Boors of Gannes, and the sones of kynge lott, as ye shull here telle here-after, and of theire merveilouse prowesse of dedes of armes. After that departed fro Sorhant the kynge Brangore, of South Walis, with iij<sup>M</sup> men of armes, and wente to Strangore, his chief Citee, for that was nexte to the roche of Saxouns, ant sente after soudiours vp and down, and assembled

His right  
name is  
Aguysans.

King Tradelyuans goes to North Wales with three thousand men. His people are glad at his return, for they had great dread of the Saxons.

He summons all that bear arms.

He defends himself in the best way he can.

\*[Fol. 63b.]

Carnile succours the Saxons by her enchantment.

King Brangore goes to Strangore with three thousand men,

and assembled six thousand men. His wife is daughter to king Adryan, the emperor of Constantinople,

whose other daughter was married to the king of Blagne and of Hungary, who died five years after he was married.

Their son is named Segramore.

The renown of Arthur spreads through every country, and in Constantinople it was in every man's mouth.

Segramore desires greatly to go to Arthur.

King Adrian counsels him to take the order of knighthood,

\*[Fol. 64a.]

and sends him to Great Britain richly arrayed.

vj<sup>m</sup> men defensable, and moche thei greved the hethen people with alle theire power. This kynge Brangore hadde a gentill lady to his wif, that was doughter to kynge Adryan, the Emperour of Constantynenoble, that was myghty and riche. And he hadde no mo childeren by his wif but two doughteres, where-of the kynge Brangore hadde oon, and the tother was in Costantyn-noble. In that tyme ther was a riche lorde and a myghty, that was kynge of blagne and of hungre; but he deyde with-ynne v yere after he was wedded, and lefte a sone, the feirest creature of man that was formed. And this childe dide wex moche and semly, and right wise and hardy. And at that day that kynge Brangore was departed fro Sorhant, he was so well waxen that he was able to be a knyght; and his right name was Segramore. This Segramore that I of speke dide after-warde many high prowesse in the reame of logres, whereof the tale shall declare yow here-after, and I shall tell yow how it fill.

**R**enomee that thurgh alle the worlde renneth yede so thourgh euery londe, so that euery contrey spake of the kynge Arthur and of his grete largesse. And so his renoun spredde thourgh euery contre, so that in Costantynnoble it was in euery mannes mouthe; So that Segramore herde ther-of speke, and was but xv yere of age, and was oon of the feirest men of the worlde, and of large stature, and beste shapen of alle membres, and ther-to hardy and wise. And whan he herde tidynges of the kynge Arthur he desired gretly to se the day and the houre that he myght be made knyght of hys honde, and seide often to hem that were of his counseile that who so myght take ordere of chivalrye moste in eny wise be a gode knyght. And whan his graunt-sire, the kynge Adrian, that tho was livynge, counseiled hym to take the ordere of knyghthode, for he was the next heire male to the Emperre after his deth. And he hym ansuerde that he wolde neuer be knyght till that Arthur, the kynge of grete breteyne, hadde made \*hym a knyght with his owne hondes. And so here-of spake thei day be day till that the kynge Adrian appareiled Segramore, and sente hym to the grete breteyne richely arrayed. But now cesseth of hym to speke more at

this tyme, and turneth to telle how these other kynges departed fro Sorhant.

**N**ow seith the storye that as soone as kynge Brangore was departed fro Sorhant, that the kynge Carados made hym redy to ryde; and with hym he hadde iij<sup>M</sup> men armed, and yede to Eastrangore, his chief Citee, and hit garnysshit vigorously, as he that was full of prowesse and grete hardynesse, and sente after knyghtes and sergeantes, alle that he myght haue he hadde assembled, vij<sup>M</sup> speres and gode men of werre. And in the partyes the saisnes ne soiourned but litill, for often were the foughten bothe even and morowe as thei saugh tyme. And often Carados and his company lay in the forestes, that were large and depe; and whan he herde telle that the saisnes com in forrey thourgh the contrey, he lepe hem a-geyns and faught with hem, so that ofte tymes he gat vpon hem and mayntened so the werre longe tyme, as the tale will reherse here-after whan the mater cometh ther-to. And after that these vj kynges were departed fro Sorhant, departed than Aguysans, the kynge of Scotlonde.

**T**his Aguysans, the kynge of Scotlonde, that departed out of Sorhant, was the richest kynge of alle the xj kynges, and was also the yongeste; but of armes he cowde not so moche as the other kynges. And he assembled his peple, and were v<sup>M</sup>, and wente to Corenge in Scotlonde, that tho was a grete Citee and a riche, and moche were greved with the saisnes that repeed ther-a-bowte, for it was but xx scotyssh myle fro the Castell of Vandesbires, ther-as was the sege of saisnes, that repeed ther-a-boute so grete peple that noon myght hem nombre that ther assembled euery day. And as soone as that the kynge Aguysans was sette in the Citee of Corenges, thei were gladd that were in the Citee of whiche were v<sup>M</sup>. And he sente alle a-boute for sowdiours on hors and on fote, so that he hadde x<sup>M</sup> with-out hem of the Cite. And so he faught many tymes with the saisnes as thei ronne thourgh the Contrey; and so he bothe loste and wan many tymes. And he made to a-mende and fortyfie the wallis of the town ther as, as thei were most feble; and thus he mayntened the werre longe tyme. After that these kynges

King Carados goes to Eastrangore with three thousand men,

and assembles seven thousand men of war.

Carados and his company lie in the forestes, and fight with the Saxons.

Aguysans, the king of Scotland is the richest of all the eleven kings. He assembles his people and goes to Corenge,

which is only twenty Scottish miles from the castle of Vandesbires.

He gathers together ten thousand soldiers, besides those in the city.

He fights the Saxons many times, sometimes losing and sometimes winning.

He fortifies  
the walls of  
his town.  
Duke Escam  
assembles his  
people and  
journeys to  
Cambenyk.

The Saxons  
come to-  
wards Arun-  
dell Castle.  
\*[Fol. 64b.]

The duke  
summons all  
his power,  
and assem-  
bles four  
thousand  
men.

King Urien  
gets together  
nine thou-  
sand men, be-  
sides the  
people of the  
city.

The country  
is wasted and  
made poor.

The Saxons  
run through  
the land of  
king Arthur  
and do great  
damage, but  
he sends  
young  
squires to  
succour it.

were departed, the Duke Escam assembled his peple, and hadde with hym iiij<sup>M</sup> men of armes; and he iourneyde so till he com to Cambenyk, his stronge Citee, that was grete and riche and full of alle maner godes, and with-ynne the Cite were iij<sup>M</sup> men defensable, that of the Duke made grete ioye when thei hym saugh, for gretly hadde thei be affraide of the saisnes that thei hadde seyn come towarde a Castell that is cleped Arondell, that was in the marche of Cambenyk, and the roche of Saisnes, that the kynge Arthur hadde well garnysshid er he wente in to \*the reame of Tamelide. And as soone as the Duke com to Cambenyk he comaunded and somowned all his power fer and nygh, and assembled wele viij<sup>M</sup> men with-oute hem that were in the Citee; and thise greved the saisnes at their power. In this maner the Duke hym contened in this maner richely as ye haue herde. Thus departet the xj barouns fro Sorhant; and the kynge Vrien leffte in his Citee, and sente thourgh euery londe and contrey a-boute, and sowdiours so that he hadde to-geder ix<sup>M</sup>, with-oute the peple of the Citee, where-of were wele vj<sup>M</sup>, and the sege was then but a iourne. And so thei fought to-geder many tymes, and loste and wonne as is the fortune of werre. And thus this stryfe lastid longe tyme, so that the contrey was wasted and made pore so sore that in v yere ther in was nought to gete. And in the contrey they lived by nought elles saf by that oon myght take of a-nother by-twene the cristen men and the saisnes, but yef eny ship by aventure a-rived at eny port in the londe. In this manere were thei sustened that other-wise ne laboured not, but werred that oon a-gein that other right harde. And the saisnes ronne thourgh the londe of kynge Arthur, and þer-Inne dide grete damage, for ther was noon that hem dide lette, till that by a-uenture, as god wolde, he sente feire yonge squires and gentill it to socoure. And I shall telle yow what thei were that so longe kepte the londes of kynge Arthur, till that he com a-geyn oute of the londe of Tamelide; so that the saisnes loste more and the barouns, that were his enmyes, than dide Arthur. And now returneth the tale a-gein to Galashyn, the sone of kynge Ventres.



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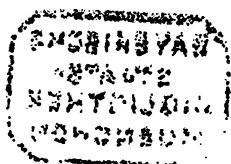
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